SRI LANKAN WOMEN'S CAREER IDENTITY EVOLUTION AFTER IMMIGRATION TO MONTREAL, QUEBEC, CANADA

Nilmini De Silva

Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology

McGill University

Montreal, Canada

August 2010

A thesis submitted to McGill University
in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

Abstract

Immigration is a significant component of Canada's population growth, and immigration policies are designed to attract and retain qualified immigrants to improve the likelihood of successful integration into Canadian society. However, many professionals who migrate do not fare well in the Canadian labour market, which is problematic because workforce integration is an important aspect of successful resettlement. This dissertation describes the career experiences and career identity evolution of ten Sri Lankan Sinhalese women who immigrated to Quebec, Canada between 1977 and 2007. This qualitative study uses a narrative methodology to explore these women's career identity development in Sri Lanka, their career experiences in Quebec, and their retrospective lifespan career identity development. The findings showed that career identity development in Sri Lanka was encouraged by family and support networks, and propelled by sociocultural and economic factors that encouraged women's education and employment. Participants demonstrated career behaviours that were goal-oriented and self-directed and had career goals that aligned with career values and personality traits. They embarked on their intended career trajectories and several had well-established careers in Sri Lanka. After immigrating to Montreal, Canada, participants experienced significant barriers to career development from immigration, educational, sociocultural and employment systems. The experience of these barriers was associated with profound affective and cognitive changes to career identity and modifications to career behaviours, career aspirations, career values, and career trajectories. Identification with their career and career

satisfaction sharply decreased initially, as participants experienced losses associated with their career changes, as well as feeling overwhelmed by the multiple demands of resettlement and the dual burdens of parenting and income-generation. The longest-residing participants attained a modest level of career satisfaction after changing their career goals and identities while others ranged between hopeful expectation and resignation to current occupations. This dissertation makes an initial examination of the career identities and career experiences of a population of South Asian immigrant women which may inform future research. This study concludes with recommendations for theory, practice, and policy related to immigrant employment and resettlement.

Résumé

L'immigration constitue une composante importante de croissance de la population canadienne. Les politiques d'immigration sont élaborées pour attirer et retenir des immigrants qui réussiront leur intégration au sein de la société canadienne. Pourtant, plusieurs professionnels immigrant au Canada ne vivent pas une intégration professionnelle réussie, ce qui entraîne des conséquences au niveau de l'intégration sociale. Cette thèse décrit les expériences de travail ainsi que l'évolution de l'identité de carrière de dix Sri Lankaises d'ethnie cingalaise ayant immigré au Québec, au Canada, entre 1977 et 2007. Cette thèse qualitative se sert d'une méthodologie narrative afin d'explorer le développement de l'identité de carrière au Sri Lanka, les expériences de travail au Québec et la rétrospective du développement de carrière au cours de la vie. Les résultats démontrent un développement de carrière au Sri Lanka encouragé par la famille et les systèmes de soutien, et propulsé par des facteurs socioculturels et économiques favorisant l'éducation et l'emploi. Les participantes ont démontré des comportements de carrière autonomes visant des buts professionnels assortis aux valeurs professionnelles et aux traits de personnalité. Plusieurs d'entre elles avaient une carrière bien établie. Après leur immigration à Montréal, au Canada, les participantes ont été confrontées à plusieurs obstacles au développement de carrière, ces derniers provenant des systèmes d'immigration, d'éducation, du marché du travail et du contexte socioculturel. L'expérience de ces obstacles est associée à de profonds changements affectifs et cognitifs liés à l'identité de carrière et des changements de comportement, d'aspirations professionnelles, de

valeurs d'emploi et de cheminement professionnel. L'identification de carrière et la satisfaction d'emploi ont initialement chuté, alors que les participantes ont vécu des pertes reliées aux changements professionnels. De plus, elles étaient accablées par les exigences de l'adaptation et les fardeaux familiaux et financiers. Celles ayant vécu le plus longtemps au Québec ont atteint un niveau de satisfaction professionnelle modeste après avoir modifié leurs objectifs de carrière, tandis que les autres se situent entre l'espoir et la résignation professionnelle. Cette étude se conclut avec des recommandations pour l'amélioration de la recherche, la pratique d'activités de counseling et des politiques reliées à l'emploi et à l'intégration des immigrants.

Acknowledgements

I am truly grateful to my supervisors Dr. Jeeseon Park and Dr. Jack De Stefano for their invaluable guidance, expertise, support, and insightful improvements of this thesis. Without them, this study would not be what it is today. I would like to also thank the members of my doctoral committee, Dr. Mela Sarkar and Dr. Anthony Paré for their tremendously uplifting and attentive reviewing of my dissertation. Travelling this educational journey would not have been possible without the support and guidance of Dr. Ted Maroun, Dr. Martin Drapeau, Dr. Marilyn Fitzpatrick, Dr. Susanne Lajoie, and Dr. Lisa Travis.

The pursuit of my studies which culminated in the completion of this dissertation would not have been possible without my father's unwavering support, my mother who inspired me to dream and gave me the means to do so, and my brother who keeps my grounded. To you all I am deeply indebted.

This study would not have been possible without the deeply personal and invaluable contributions of the participants of my study, who through the sharing of their experiences bring us closer to improving the lives of many others.

I cannot end these acknowledgements without thanking Erin Beetam, Guy-Robert Desmangles, Francine Gauvin, Diane Bernier, Dr. Mariam Haider, Dr. Martha Chamodraka, Dr. Kevin Chin, Dr. Ozge Akcali, Dr. Sheila Jabalpurwala, Dr. Tony Bernadelli, Dr. Judith Norton, Dr. Shawna Atkins, and Dr. Monica Justin for their enduring support and encouragement during my graduate studies, and my undergraduate honors thesis supervisor, Dr. Norman

Segalowitz, a wonderful human being who inspired me to undertake this professional path.

This research would not be what it is without my clinical experience, and for the invaluable contributions to my clinical training, I would like to thank Jeff Agate, Jim Robinson, Guylaine Saint-Pierre, Dr. Catherine Tellides, Dr. Vera Romano, Dr. Ruta Westreich, Dr. Liliane Spector, Dr. Jack De Stefano, and Dr. Anastassios Stalikas.

Last but not least, I am deeply grateful to the Higher Power that has guided and sustained me throughout my life and that has seen me through all the trials and tribulations I have faced.

Chapter I: Introduction

Immigration is an important source of population growth for Canada, drawing close to a quarter of a million individuals annually since 2001 (Citizenship & Immigration Canada, 2005a). Immigrants constitute more than 17% of the Canadian population (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2005a; Statistics Canada, 1996) and 18% of the population in the city of Montreal (Statistics Canada, 1996). In 2004, the province of Quebec welcomed 44,000 immigrants of whom over half were women (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2005a).

Despite the positive growth of immigration in Quebec, its workforce is facing a looming economic crisis: Due to an aging population, the province faces a worrisome decrease in its working age population. Statistics from the Institut de la Statistique du Québec (2005) predict that starting in 2013 there will be a decrease in the number of citizens of working age, ultimately leading to a decrease in the ratio of workers per retired individuals from 4.5 in 2010 to 3.7 in 2016, and 2.6 in 2026. The group that is most likely to alleviate this tension is Quebec's incoming immigrant population. Unfortunately, the labour market integration of immigrants in Quebec is fraught with more problems than that of other Canadian provinces (Boudarbat & Boulet, 2010).

It is necessary to explore the employment-related factors which underlie these projections if we are to understand what these statistics imply for the employment of immigrants to Quebec. In order to do so, this study examines the process of employment and career adjustment that immigrants go through when

arriving in a new country. More specifically, this study explores how individuals from one South Asian immigrant group, Sri Lankan women, develop their career identities by highlighting their career identity development following immigration to Montreal, Quebec, Canada. This introductory chapter presents some foundational topics that will contextualize and situate the study. First, career identity and employment, along with their relevance to an individual's concept of self, well-being, and mental health will be discussed. Following this, background information will be presented regarding the state of immigrant unemployment, immigrant women's unemployment, and Sri Lankan immigrant women's employment in Canada. This section will conclude with the rationale and purpose of the study.

The Significance of Career Identity to Self-Concept

Self-concept is a "picture of the self in some role, situation, or position, performing some set of functions, or in some web of relationships" (Savickas, 2002, p. 163). It is formed through social, experiential, and interactive learning as well as self-reflection (Allison & Cossette, 2007). Self-concept is viewed as having a general facet, as well as specific facets (e.g., academic, social). Career self-concept is part of an individual's overall self-concept, which is organized, multidimensional, hierarchical, stable, and developmental (Byrne, 1984). Defined as "the cognitive representation of the self derived from past career experiences, beliefs, values, attributes and motives that define the individual in terms of their career" (Slay, 2006, p. 22), career self-concept is the "possession of a clear and stable picture of one's goals, interests, and talent" (Holland, 1985, p. 5). Career

self-concept is a facet that represents an individual's subjective view of their occupational values, interests, abilities and choices (Super, 1990; Super, Savickas, & Super, 1996). The occupation is a way of implementing the self-concept, thus occupation is the individual's expression of the self-concept through the occupational role (Savickas, 2002). Therefore, career self-concept is an important and public area of self-concept (Baker & Aldrich, 1996; Hall, 2002). Further, it appears that self-concept has a compensatory function, such that a lower status of self-concept in one facet, (e.g., social), can be compensated for by higher status in another facet of self-concept, (e.g., academic) (Winne & Marx, 1981). This highlights the power of a meaningful career self-concept to buoy the global self-concept of immigrants who may experience a devaluation of certain facets of their self-concept following migration.

Super's lifespan-lifespace theory (Super et al., 1996) states that self-concept develops in five stages over the lifespan, (e.g., exploration, establishment), and it is bounded by six life roles (e.g., student, worker), and environmental, situational, and personal determinants (e.g., labour market, socioeconomic status). Their theory posits that occupational preferences and competencies are based on life determinants and experiences, and are reflected as vocational maturity. Furthermore, career identity and other social roles or identities (e.g., mother, citizen) interact reciprocally to shape each other (Super et al., 1996). Given the focus of the present study, it is important to understand how migration affects these developmental factors and thereby career identity development.

Occupational aspirations are individuals' career-related goals in ideal circumstances and reflect their self-concept, perceived opportunities, interests, and hopes (Rojewski, 2005). Research suggests that these occupational aspirations are associated with self-esteem and career maturity, and those with higher self-esteem are more likely to aspire to professional status occupations while those who have lower self-esteem are more likely to aspire to skilled or semi-professional occupations (Rojewski, 2005). This link between occupational aspirations and self-esteem suggests that being forced to change occupational aspirations due to external factors may detrimentally impact self-esteem and global self-concept.

Importance of Economic Integration to Immigrants' Adjustment

Finding employment is a critical step in the assimilation process of new immigrants (Yost, & Lucas, 2002). As immigrants resettle in their host country, one of their first priorities is achieving financial stability. Satisfactory employment provides many benefits, such as self-esteem, involvement at work, commitment to an organization, improvement in morale, life satisfaction, physical health, mental health, and productivity (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984; Mallinckrodt & Bennett, 1992; Vinokur, Schul, Vuori, & Price, 2000). Meaningful work contributes to the sense of fulfillment through mastery of self and the environment as well as to the sense that one is a valued member of society (Blustein, 2006; Donkin, 2001; O'Toole, 1981). In contrast, unemployment is likely to have "emotional, psychological and behavioural corollaries of disrupted or confused meaning, identity, affiliation, and negative feelings of self-esteem" (Herr &

Cramer, 1996, p. 94). Findings show that the consequences of unemployment extend beyond the workplace, and are associated with problems regarding relationships, excessive alcohol consumption, difficulties with government employment offices, loss of status, and a crisis of self-esteem (Kieselbach & Lunser, 1990).

Successful employment also contributes to a greater sense of belonging to the host country (Krau, 1984), with some researchers suggesting that employment-related issues can be important indicators of immigrants' adjustment to a new society (Majka & Mullan, 1992; Weiner, 1996). Employment generates predictable life routines, which regularize patterns of behaviour and give structure to life. These patterns of regular life can provide some solace while immigrants adjust to their new environment. In contrast, occupational setbacks and inability to achieve occupational success are likely to lead to frustration, depression, and anxiety in immigrant populations (Bhattacharya, 2008; Lindert, von Ehrenstein, Priebe, Mielck, & Brahler, 2009; Mak, Westwood, Ishiyama, & Barker, 1999).

Immigrant Women's Employment in Canada

Compared to native or naturalized Canadians, immigrants have lower employment rates and lower incomes (Statistics Canada, 2001a; Statistics Canada, 2001b). A number of factors influence immigrant unemployment and underemployment (i.e., securing jobs for which they are overqualified) such as negative stereotypes about immigrant employees and concerns about negative reactions to hiring immigrants (Lee & Westwood, 1996). Systemic aspects such as restrictive Canadian professional accreditation systems (Man, 2004),

employers' requirements of Canadian work experience (Reitz, 2001) combined with immigrants' limited English or French fluency (Godin & Renaud, 2005) result in immigrants being restricted to enclave labour and labour market conditions (Reitz & Sklar, 1997). As a result, there is increasing concern that a large number of immigrants are unable to enter the occupations they were previously trained in (Tolley, 2003).

Among immigrants, women tend to have poorer employment outcomes (Dominguez & Hombrados, 2006; Wong & Hirschman, 1983). It has been reported that immigrant women in particular face additional challenges such as intra-group sexism and sexist discrimination at work (Raghuram & Kofman, 2004; Reitz & Sklar, 1997). In addition, due to cultural norms surrounding domestic work, immigrant women tend to work a second shift at home. Second shift refers to the extra work that working women have when they are responsible for domestic work as well as their employment outside the home (Hochschild & Machung, 1989; Johnson & Johnson, 2008). Compared to non-immigrant women, immigrant women were more likely to be unemployed and to experience labour market integration difficulties (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2005a; Statistics Canada, 2001a). In 2000, immigrant women earned 75% the income of non-immigrant women, and 40% were unemployed compared to 7% of non-immigrant women (Statistics Canada, 2001a). These figures highlight the consensus in the literature that describes immigrant women as facing significant difficulties when seeking employment. These difficulties are primarily

responsible for the large gulf in income levels between immigrant and non-immigrant women (Man, 2004; Raghuram & Kofman, 2004; Reitz, 2001).

Immigration from Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka has been consistently ranked among the top ten countries sending immigrants to Canada between 1986 and 2001 (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2001). Sri Lanka has been the fifth largest source country of immigrants to Canada between 1991 and 2001 (Hyndman, 2003). Among refugee-sending countries, Sri Lanka ranked second in 1998, 2000, and 2002 and ranked first in 1995 (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2001; Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2002). Since 1983, the majority of Sri Lankan immigrants arrived as refugees due to the ethnic war waged between Sinhalese and Tamil ethnic groups. Sri Lankans most commonly emigrate for safety from the interethnic warfare where they or their loved ones may be specifically targeted, or where they may be inadvertent victims of warfare. They may enter Canada as political refugees or through family reunification class of migration when sponsored by family members living in Canada. The period prior to migration can be very unsettled and dangerous and the migration itself can be perilous. Typically, great effort is concentrated on securing safe passage out of the country for both refugees and sponsored immigrants.

The literature describes the effects of war and enforced refugee status as grief, loss, depression, and feelings of uprootedness (Cole, Espin, & Rothblum, 1992). When Sri Lankans migrate because of ethnic conflict, their destinations are usually based on sponsorship opportunities and asylum-granting policies of

the host country (Hyndman, 2003). In light of this, Sri Lankans immigrate to Canada as it abides by the Geneva Convention which grants asylum and residency to those who are deemed persecuted individuals (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2009). Following three years of residency in Canada, individuals become eligible for Canadian citizenship, which is highly attractive because of Canada's greater employment opportunities, security, and higher standard of living.

Sri Lankan Immigrant Women's Employment in Canada

According to the 1991 Canadian census, 31,435 Sri Lankans were living in Canada that year. Those numbers had dramatically increased by the Canadian Census of 2001 which showed over 103,000 Sri Lankans living in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2001b). Canadian statistics show that Sri Lankan immigrant women in Quebec aged 25 to 44 years earned only 57% of the full-time average income of women in Quebec aged 25 to 44 years (Statistics Canada, 2001). This significant disparity of earnings with the provincial average is incongruent with the skills and aspirations of Sri Lankan immigrant women. More specifically, with regard to Sri Lankan culture, women are encouraged, if not expected, to become part of the workforce (Hettige, 1997). Thus, employment-related socialization is likely to contribute to making it part of their identity. In addition, because public university education is free in Sri Lanka, Sri Lankan women are likely to pursue degrees in higher education, to be employed, and to hold professional occupations. Therefore, the career-related characteristics of this

group of immigrant women suggest that career identity would be an essential component of their identity.

Rationale and Purpose of the Study

Rationale of the study. While a substantive amount of research has examined immigrant women's employment in general, little attention has been given to the career identity of immigrant women (Borgen & Amundsen, 1985; Raghuram & Kofman, 2004; Weaver, 2005; Xu, 2006). Career identity is directly related to employment choice and integration into the workforce (Blustein, 2008; Fouad & Bynner, 2008; Herr, 1997; Meijers, 1998; Super, 1990). These women's career identity may undergo significant changes in tandem with the disruptions caused by immigration and resettlement. These issues critical to career identity development may be greatly amplified in Quebec, as immigrants from South Asia are among the two racial groups that experience the highest rate of unemployment in the province (Boudarbat & Boulet, 2010). Therefore, immigrant women's career identity merits being studied as part of the process of integration into the Quebec labour market.

Among immigrant women, Sri Lankan immigrant women are of particular interest to agencies interested in immigrant resettlement because they constitute a sizable group of immigrants to Canada. As census data indicate, Sri Lankans are a relatively large group of immigrants to Quebec (Statistics Canada, 1996). This population has been overlooked by the research community, leaving Sri Lankan immigrant women's occupational success and career identity virtually unexamined in the literature. A search of the PsycInfo database that catalogues

articles from over 1,300 journals in psychology, medicine, psychiatry, nursing, sociology, education, pharmacology, physiology, and linguistics published from 1872 to 2010 reveal only one research study relating to the career identity or career development of Sri Lankan immigrant women. In addition, no studies have examined how occupational expectations and prior work experience of Sri Lankan women influence their employment choices when they immigrate to Quebec. Given the growing population of Sri Lankan immigrant women in Quebec, their poor employment outcomes in Quebec (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2005b; Godin & Renaud, 2002), and the dearth of knowledge about the effects of poor employment outcomes on their career identity, there is a strong need for research on Sri Lankan immigrant women's career identity development following their resettlement and employment experiences. This knowledge could help career counsellors and mental health professionals better understand challenges faced by these women and better serve their career needs.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada (2005) outlined research needs based on their analyses of the knowledge base on immigrants and their integration into the labour market. They recommended that research focus on major cities, on specific classes of immigrants, and examine employment activity over time (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2005). These immigrant integration research needs are addressed in this dissertation which focuses on employment in Montreal, within the refugee and sponsored classes, and focuses on career development over a period of several years.

Purpose of the study. This study explores Sri Lankan immigrant women's career identity development following prior to and after their employment experiences in Quebec, Canada. Given the lack of information on this topic, a qualitative inquiry into Sri Lankan refugee women's employment-seeking experience and career identity is appropriate. This exploration will use a narrative methodology which will allow the researcher to explore identities as they are constructed and reconstructed through the stories individuals tell about themselves (Bruner, 1986; Bruner, 1990; Polkinghorne, 1988; Ricoeur, 1991). Narratives also allow the researcher to elicit information about participants' career identity through the participants' own words and assist in bringing out the participants' voices (Clandinin & Connelly, 1988; Polkinghorne, 1988) which can enable an unrestricted range of career concepts to emerge. This approach is well-suited to the exploratory nature of this research study. The descriptive narratives which are obtained will provide an overview of career identity and a foundation on which to conduct future research.

The primary goal of this study is to address how Sri Lankan women's career identities change over time following the process of migration. Stories about their career and the changes to their career identity will be used to describe the evolution of these women's career identities. This study addresses the following three research questions: (a) How did Sri Lankan immigrant women view their career identities prior to migrating to Canada? (b) What changes do Sri Lankan immigrant women see in their career identities in light of their

employment experiences?; and (c) How do Sri Lankan immigrant women describe their current career identities?

Chapter II: Literature Review

This chapter will provide an overview of the existing bodies of theory and research. The chapter will start by covering career identity and career identity theories. This will be followed by an overview of research on immigrant women's employment. Then, Sri Lankan women's career identity and their employment will be discussed. Lastly, I will discuss the gaps in the research on immigrant women's career development and employment and the need for this dissertation.

Prior to presenting the body of research, it is necessary to define the terms that will be used in this dissertation. In this dissertation, the term "job" is used to refer to a single position of employment of finite duration. The terms "occupation" and "profession" refer to employment positions that require post-secondary education and carry a title (e.g., teacher). The term "career" refers to a series of occupations or professions that took place or are expected to occur over a period of time.

Career Theories

Self-concept is a multi-dimensional construct consisting of one's perception of oneself and is defined as "attitudes, feelings and knowledge about our abilities, skills, appearance, and social acceptability" (Jersild, 1965; Labenne & Greene, 1969; West & Fish, 1973). It is clearly defined, internally consistent, and temporally stable (Ayduk, Gyurak, & Luerssen, 2009). Following a review of several theoretical perspectives on self-concept, Winne and Marx (1981) concluded that interaction with others has strong influence on the development of

self-concept and that self-concept has multiple spheres such as academic, social, physical, and emotional. In addition, as Winne and Marx (1981) proposed, it appears that self-concept has a compensatory effect, such that a positive self-concept in one facet (e.g., academic or career) can compensate for the devaluation of another sphere of self-concept (e.g., social).

Career identity is closely related to self-concept and the occupational roles that individuals hold in their daily work (Super, 1981; Super, 1990). Career identity and occupational roles hinge on abilities, interests, values, history, and aspirations, which contribute to how people define themselves and their self-concept (Super, 1990; Super et al., 1996). Therefore, career theories that focus on occupational roles were chosen for a review as theoretical frameworks for this study because of the inextricable relationship between an individual's roles and the self. Five career theories - Super's (1957, 1980, 1990) life-span life-space approach, Gottfredson's (1981) theory of circumscription and compromise, work role transition theory (Nicholson, 1984; West, 1987; West & Rushton, 1989), role exit theory (Ebaugh, 1977; Ebaugh 1988) and Cross-Cultural Life-Career Framework (Chen 2008) - will be presented and the application of each theory to the dissertation research topic will be discussed.

Super's Life-span Life-space Approach. Super's (1957, 1980, 1990) life-span life-space approach posits developmental stages in career development and the influence of social roles (e.g., student, homemaker, citizen) on an individual's career options. The five major developmental stages are growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, and decline. Within each of these larger

stages, an individual goes through mini-stages where they engage in specific developmental tasks, (e.g., consolidating work attitudes and habits during the establishment stage). The theory's strength and applicability to this study are that it emphasizes the important relationship between career identity and self-concept, both of which are invariably tested during resettlement in a new country. Education and career provide structure to life (Super, 1957) and contribute to academic and global self-concept (Winne & Marx, 1981). Employment creates an important relationship between an individual and their society (Abrahams & Steven, 1990) by promoting social contact and fostering a sense of belonging and community (Beiser, 1999). Such feelings are important to the psychological well-being of new immigrants and vital to promoting the work of rebuilding their place in the host society (Beiser, Gill, & Edwards, 1993; Westermeyer, Neider, & Vang, 1984; Westermeyer, Vang, & Neider, 1983). In addition, work contributes to the global self-concept because through the roles an individual assumes at work s/he maintains an ongoing definition of self (Savickas, 1997). Similarly, Super (1957) stated that individuals ascribe meaning to their skills, areas of interest, values, and career choices, and that these merge with an individual's life themes.

The limitations of this theory are that even though it acknowledges that dramatic contextual change has a different impact on career development than normal career development through the concept of life redesign (Herr, 1997), it falls short of explaining how life redesign impacts career identity. Life span theory does not take account of the magnitude of the migration transition and as such ignores a large group of individuals whose life experiences include

transitional work experiences that are outside the boundaries of the theory. In addition, this theory is based on normative studies of men in North America, and is less applicable to women's career development and immigrant women's career development.

Gottfredson's Theory of Circumscription and Compromise.

Gottfredson's (1981) theory of circumscription and compromise places emphasis on self-concept, on aspects such as gender and socio-economic class, as well as on occupational stereotypes. Individuals have a cognitive map of characteristics of occupations, such as its level of prestige, its place on the masculinity-femininity continuum, and its field. Occupational aspirations take into account the compatibility between the map of each occupation and their own self-concept, as well as the accessibility of occupations. Two processes are at work when defining career choices: circumscription and compromise. Circumscription is a desired limitation of career choices that occurs during childhood and early adolescence and is based on occupational factors such as power, sex roles, social valuation, and the individual's own internal and unique self. Compromise occurs when individuals give up certain desired career choices based on their perception of incompatibility with the occupation and whether the occupation is realistically obtainable.

Given that externally visible aspects are likely to undergo major changes during resettlement and acculturation following immigration, this theory's focus on the social self is a useful lens to apply to this study. In addition, the theory emphasizes the way occupational choices are shaped by external factors such as

educational opportunities, and internal factors such as self-concept, and the interactions between the two (Brown, Brooks, & Associates, 1996). Also, this theory addresses the compromise process that individuals undergo when they have to merge their career ideals with the limits imposed by reality and this is the strength of this theory to understanding the career identity development of immigrant women. Finally, this theory is pertinent to this study because it takes into account the prestige of an occupation. Asian immigrants represent a subgroup who value education (Lee & Westwood, 1996; Sue & Kitano, 1973, Sue & Okazaki, 1990), and where occupational prestige is fundamental to social status. Given that participants of this study are likely to experience a decrease in occupational prestige during their adjustment to life in Canada, the compromises required in occupational selection may be problematic for them.

Nonetheless, this theory is also limited in its applicability to this study because it stresses the process of career choice as occurring during the formative years of schooling. It also stresses the fit between gender and choice of occupation. These factors do not apply as neatly in the case for Sri Lankan women who migrate and are required to renegotiate their occupational standing in Canada as adults. In addition, these women's career choice may be influenced by factors other than gender identity such as income or availability of jobs. More importantly, the notion of having a certain amount of control over occupational choices is fundamental to the theory of circumscription and compromise (Brown et al., 1996), and may not reflect the reality of the limited occupational control and choice of the initial stages of resettlement following immigration.

Work Role Transition Theory. This theory represented a shift away from the traditional view of developing one lifetime profession and focuses on the process of transitioning between careers. The notion of work role transitions is particularly suited to the changing workforce of today's society, where immigration and workforce redesign have led to increased occupational transitions. Work role transitions are defined as a major change in employment status and job content, such as a promotion or change of occupation (Glaser & Strauss, 1971). This theory considers the occupational requirements of the jobs the individual is leaving and entering, the individual's psychological disposition and motivation, their former occupational socialization, and their current occupational socialization. It is conceptualized that individuals explore change in identity by observing others, identifying identities that match, and then imitating and adapting identities that best suit their new role (Ibarra, 1999). Career transitions are described as having five stages. The initial stage consists of preparation for change, followed by the first days of encounter with the change, then adjustment to generate the best fit between the individual and their new role, stabilization into the new role, and finally preparation for future repetition of the cycle (Nicholson, 1984, 1987; Nicholson & West, 1989). Identity change is partly a function of role change, thus an individual may explore role changes or make changes to their assumed role as they change their values, goals, and self-concept (Nicholson, 1984).

The appeal of job transition theory is in how it addresses societal and individual factors that ultimately impact individual's occupational adjustment

during job transitions. This is especially true with expatriate adjustment where occupational transitions and adjustments can be amplified in magnitude and frequency. The implications of this theory for this study are clear: the five stages of change that are posited would also occur following migration. However, with politically-based migration and sponsored migration, preparation for the job market of the host country or for a transition to a specific job prior to migration is not typical. There is also the focus on more enduring instances of job change (e.g., promotion or job tenure), which are different from the series of temporary jobs that are typically held by immigrants as they seek employment in a host country (Girard, 2002; Thomas & Rappak, 1998), such as short-term factory work or seasonal work. The occupational renegotiation process immigrants undergo is likely to be vastly different from that of an individual who is in his native social surroundings and negotiating a change in one life role. Also, unlike posited by the theory, immigrants may not be able to observe and adopt certain occupational roles and identities if they do not have access to individuals in these occupations. The social modeling central to the theory requires that immigrants be able to identify sufficiently with occupational role models, which may not be the case if there is too great a discrepancy between their identity and that of their role model.

Role Exit Theory. Role exit theory focuses on the "the process of disengagement from a [work] role that is central to one's global identity and the reestablishment of an identity in a new role that takes into account one's ex-role" (Ebaugh, 1988, p. 1). This theory is particularly relevant to contexts where individuals experience employment loss and the ensuing change in role that

accompanies it. The process of role exit is composed of four stages: doubting, seeking and weighing role alternatives, negotiating turning points, and establishing a new role based on an ex-role identity (Ebaugh, 1988). Certain characteristics of the role exit, some individual and some social, may alter an individual's perception of the stages. Individual-related characteristics of role exit include the degree of voluntariness in the change, the centrality of the role to the individual's identity, the reversibility and duration of the role change, the individual's level of awareness, the sequentiality of the change, and the degree of control the individual had over the exit. Socially-related characteristics consist of individual versus group (cohort) exits, single versus multiple exits, social desirability or stigma associated with the exit, and the degree of institutionalization associated with the role change (Ebaugh, 1988).

This theory posits that prior to an individual's exit from a work role they may experience role shock. Role shock represents the stresses and tensions experienced as individuals encounter discontinuity when they move from a familiar to an unfamiliar role (Minkler & Biller, 1979). In fact, this is the essence of the experience of immigrants. Role shock is most closely linked to role exit when the role that is left is heavily tied to an individual's identity (Minkler & Biller, 1979). Role shock may be more likely to be experienced by individuals who were invested in their occupation and career, which may be the case for the population in this study. Many economic class immigrants migrate hoping to achieve better financial and occupational status, thus their work role exit may be perceived as a risky but necessary step. However, in cases where migration was

sudden or forced by circumstances unrelated to work, as it is often the case of refugees or sponsees, it is possible that their work role exit is an undesirable outcome. It may be hypothesized that immigrants transpose their employment hopes and expectations to the labour market of the host country with little awareness of employment realities, thereby increasing their vulnerability to dissatisfaction and greater psychological distress related to unemployment and underemployment.

Cross-Cultural Life-Career Development Framework. This framework proposed by Chen (2008) is not a theory but rather a macro framework which can guide theory development. This framework attends to context, self-concept, and cross-cultural and multicultural aspects and includes very important considerations for immigrant women's career development such as "language proficiency, familiarity with the host country culture, [..] discrimination, lack of recognition of foreign credentials and work experience [..]" (Chen, 2008). The framework contends that the overall life transition and resettlement will be greatly influenced by the success of the career transition and vocational identity change. Vocational identity change often occurs because the vocational changes usually involve the loss of their career identity. This issue which is closely tied to non-recognition of credentials, work experience and lack of linguistic proficiency has been partly attributed to a disconnection between Canada's immigration program and the structure and demands of the labour market. An array of psychological difficulties such as "feelings of frustration, bitterness, anger, loss, worthlessness, and hopelessness" may emerge as a result. While this framework attends of

several important factors involved in immigrant career identity development, it falls short at addressing gender, gender role stereotypes, and gender-based discrimination and its impact on vocational identity development.

Each of the aforementioned career theories has strengths that facilitate the understanding of career identity for Westernized populations or those undergoing within-country career transitions. Early theories of career development (Holland, 1958; Super, 1953) are linear models based on North American men's career and life development, and chart progress from one modular stage to the next. However, these theories were not designed to reflect the special needs and characteristics of women, racial and ethnic minorities, or disadvantaged populations. Thus, these theories have limitations for illustrating experiences of immigrant women whose employment qualifications are typically unrecognized. Migration and career theories have not yet addressed migration and resettlement effects on life cycle transitions and on career identity. At a time when the workforce is becoming increasingly culturally diverse, the lack of studies on immigrants' career and career identity shifts is a major gap in the literature (Van Hooft, Born, Taris, & van der Flier, 2004).

Career Transitions Research

Career transition research has gained more interest recently, particularly in the 1990s, due to the increasing number of career transitions in an individual's lifetime and the need to understand the processes and outcomes thereof. As will be discussed next, most studies have examined transitions that occur within the

individual's current profession and within the organization and nation, including expatriate adjustment and repatriation, as well as school-to-work transitions.

Many studies have examined job changes in the context of internal promotions, job rotations, adaptation to new roles within the existing organization or within their original profession (Blau, 2000; Ostroff & Clark, 2001; Prince, 2003). Some of these studies examined institution-related factors such occupational changes due to state-sanctioned promotions and transfers based on changes in economic system (Zhao & Zhou, 2004), forms of commitment to an employment organization which depended on intraorganizational or extraorganizational reasons for moving (Kondratuk, Hausdorf, Korabik, & Rosin, 2003), and ways to enhance work roles for employee satisfaction to outweigh outward mobility (Prince, 2003). Other studies examined individual–level factors such as how individuals manoeuvre professional identity in transition by experimenting with provisional selves and evaluating internal standards against work experience (Ibarra, 1999), the intuitive, rational, and dependent modalities of job change decision-making (Singh & Greenhaus, 2004), the willingness to accept various types of job changes ranging from promotions to relocations (Ostroff & Clark, 2001), and the developmentally different tasks that careers demand of men and women (Ohlott, Ruderman, & McCauley, 1994). These studies were primarily quantitative, sampled male and female employees, and examined career transitions that did not involve relocation.

Fewer studies have looked at career transitions that occur outside one's field or country of origin. Those studies that examined transitions into new fields

or occupations provide interesting developmental and career change decision-making perspectives. Smart and Peterson (1997) examined midlife career changes using Super's adult career development theory and found levels of satisfaction with overall career development to be greatest when individuals had completed a job transition (not during the transition) or when they held stable job positions without change. However, unlike in the case of many immigrants, the individuals studied in job transition exercised personal choice about making the career transition. This is a consideration that nuances the applicability of the findings to immigrants' job transitions.

Professions are a specific type of occupation that "employ individuals who exhibit high levels of expertise, autonomy, commitment to work, commitment to the profession, identification with the profession, ethics, and collegial maintenance of standards" (Blau & Lunz, 1998, p. 261). Commitment to a profession is a very stable type of commitment that can transcend personal or situational factors (Morrow, 1993). In a study composed mostly of female professionals, Blau and Lunz (1998) found that with greater age and overall job satisfaction there is lesser intent to leave the profession. In addition, it has been suggested that with greater time spent in a profession, greater investment into the profession occurs (e.g., continuing education, network of contacts), and obligation towards remaining in the profession increases (Rusbult & Farrell, 1983; Rusbult, Farrell, Rogers, & Mainous, 1988), resulting in increased occupational commitment (Blau, Surges Tatum, & Ward-Cook, 2003). These highlight the

significance of belonging to a profession and suggest that exiting a profession can be a very difficult decision, in cases where it is intentional as well as not.

Career development is theorized as continuing into the 40s for men (Levinson, 1986), which opens midlife career development and transitions as being a normative part of adult career development, at least for men, and highlights the concept of ongoing career maturity development (Super, 1980) which is thought to take place beyond adolescence and into early adulthood. Some studies focused on intentional and transformational midlife changes that fit within the broad definition of vocation. These studies investigated voluntary role exits, such as leaving corporate careers, exiting professions or religious vocations, and intentional changes to one's relationships to individuals and institutions. Such turning points in adult men and women's lives stemming from changes in their social circumstances were found to generate a combination of attraction and ambivalence towards the changes (Goodman, 1979).Also, individuals who actively transformed aspects of their lives demonstrated innovativeness by taking creative action in the varied circumstances they experienced (Brans, 1989) and needed to resolve crucial issues before moving to the next stage of adult development (Erikson, 1968). Similar approaches to career transformation may be useful to understanding immigrant women's career identity development following migration.

Occupational Aspirations and Expectations

Occupational aspirations are "an individual's expressed career-related goals or choices" (Rojewski, 2005, p. 132), are formed during early childhood and remain

stable over time (Armstrong & Crombie, 2000; Rojewski & Kim, 2003; Rojewski & Yang, 1997). Occupational aspirations are associated with other constructs such as self-esteem, career goals, and career maturity. General self-esteem had an effect on American adolescents' occupational aspirations (Rojewski & Yang, 1997). Overall, students who were more likely to aspire to professional status occupations also reported higher self-esteem, more career knowledge, greater career maturity, and achieving well at school. Occupational aspirations play an important role in career development (Rojewski, 2005). They have been regarded as an important career motivational variable, and were predictive of career attainment levels (Chung, Loeb, & Gonzo, 1996; Holland, Gottfredson, & Baker, 1990; Schoon & Parsons, 2002). Therefore, individuals with high occupational aspirations and expectations are likely to invest in career development activities and, as a result, develop high career maturity and enjoy higher self-esteem.

In contrast to aspirations, occupational expectations are occupations that an individual believes would be realistic for them to pursue (Armstrong & Crombie, 2000; Davey & Stoppard, 1993). The occupational aspiration – expectation discrepancy reflects a process of compromise and circumscription of career choices. Compromise and circumscription occurred among individuals from lower socioeconomic levels (Lee, 1984; Thomas, 1976) and in contexts of perceived lack of parental support for adolescents' occupational aspirations (McWhirter, Hackett, & Bandolos, 1998). Risk of academic failure also played a role in occupational aspirations. Adolescents at greater risk were more likely to reduce their occupational aspirations and had greater discrepancies between their occupational aspirations and expectations (Rojewski &

Hill, 1998), whereas those who were confident of their academic abilities matched their occupational aspirations more closely to their expectations (Furlong & Biggart, 1999). The implications of these findings are that career compromise is a process engaged in more by those in low socioeconomic status levels and those who perceive themselves as being at highest levels of academic risk. Individuals who do not perceive themselves as belonging to those categories may find having to make career-related compromises challenges not only their career identity but also assumptions about their self-concept.

Immigration and Career

Immigration typically poses a very disruptive and discontinuous change in the life cycle of an individual. Immigrants undergo a major life transition as their lives are disconnected from their family networks, their educational and employment trajectories, and their financial and social resources. For immigrants who experienced a sudden or forced migration, additional psychological factors such as coping with the sudden multiple losses apply in the process of resettlement and re-employment. Unfortunately, immigrant unemployment rates and their difficulties obtaining employment commensurate with their training and experience are problematic at the national (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2005b), community, and individual levels (Godin, 2004; Lacroix, 2004). The broad context of systemic factors, community factors and individual factors that influence immigrants' employment in the Canadian labour market will be elaborated next.

Systemic factors. Systemic factors in immigrant women's work include a range of contextual influences from immigration policies to training and

experience equivalency conditions. These factors may apply differently in Canada, because the Canadian economy, multicultural policy, and governmental and social reception of immigrants differ from the United States. Systemic factors with the significant implications for immigrant workers are provincial education equivalence processes and national policy of multiculturalism. Canadian multiculturalism is an affirmative policy which values and seeks to preserve immigrant cultures (Rodríguez-García, 2010). The U.S. takes an assimilationist approach oriented towards making immigrants culturally indistinguishable from the dominant culture (Rodríguez-García, 2010). The implications of multiculturalism are greater openness to ethnic differences in society. However, stringent educational and work experience equalization policies have opposite effects on immigrant employability.

The Canadian immigration policy focuses on selecting immigrants on the basis of their skills, work experience, financial resources and fluency in English or French (Badets & Howatson-Leo, 1998; Reitz & Sklar, 1997). However, despite being well-educated and highly skilled, economic and business class immigrants are often unable to obtain satisfactory employment in the Canadian labour market (Tian, 2000; Xu, 2006; Yu, 2002). Some other systemic reasons for Asian immigrants' decreased likelihood to be in professional positions despite their educational attainment are employers' requirement of Canadian experience and the under-recognition of foreign credentials (Basavarajappa & Verma, 1985). Most immigrants face professional barriers such as lack of recognition of foreign credentials (Xu, 2006), restrictive Canadian professional accreditation systems

(Man, 2004; Xu, 2006), lack of Canadian experience (Basavarajappa & Verma, 1985; McDate, 1988; Xu, 2006), and enclave labour and labour market conditions (Reitz & Sklar 1997). In addition, the absence of English or French fluency (Godin & Renaud, 2005; Zong, 2004), negative stereotypes about immigrant employees (Bouchard & Taylor, 2008) and temporary nature of jobs given to many new immigrants (Lee & Westwood, 1996), and the burden of domestic work (Hochschild, 1989; Man, 2002) all contribute to immigrants' unemployment and underemployment.

Gender plays a role in employment success. Gender stereotyping has a systemic influence on an individual's employment opportunities. Immigrant women consistently show poorer economic success than immigrant men, even after controlling for other known factors such as human capital (i.e., educational certification and work experience), household composition, and indicators of acculturation (Espiritu, 1999). An examination of immigrant women's employment in Canada over the past decade indicated that they also had poorer labour market outcomes compared to non-immigrant women. Immigrant women were more likely to be unemployed and to experience labour market integration difficulties than non-immigrant women (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2005a; Statistics Canada, 2001a). In 2000, recent immigrant women earned 75% the income of non-immigrant women, and 40% were unemployed compared to 7% of non-immigrant women (Statistics Canada, 2001a). These figures quantify the reality that immigrant women face difficulties finding employment and even when they do find employment, income levels are much lower than those of non-

immigrant women. Factors that impede immigrant women's employment (Boyd, 1987; Ip, 1993; Iredale, 2004; Raghuram & Kaufman, 2004) are well established and include lack of accreditation of their existing qualifications (Iredale, 2004) and gender stereotyping (Ip, 1993) among others.

Racial discrimination is also a systemic influence on an individual's employment opportunities. The feminist and multicultural literature discuss the dual burdens of women of ethnic minorities who face both racism and sexism and the consequent discrimination, pay inequity, and harassment in the workforce (Barnum, Liden & Ditomaso, 1995; Beale, 1970; Berdahl & Moore, 2006). The effects of being a woman and belonging to a minority ethnic group include minority stress, reduced self-efficacy (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1996), and coming to terms with the effects of race on career (Smith, 1975; Troyna & Smith, 1983).

Community factors. At the community level, research findings for the quality of employment, as indicated by income, showed that in most cases, reliance on human capital (i.e., an individual's education and work experience as defined by Bourdieu (1986)) and inter-ethnic social capital (i.e., employment contacts outside one's ethnic group) were beneficial (Nee & Sanders, 2001) and that intra-ethnic dependence (i.e., dependence on employment contacts within one's ethnic group) was detrimental to income (Friedman & Krackhardt, 1997). The exception was immigrants from groups with high socioeconomic status who obtained higher incomes using intra-ethnic social capital (Ooka & Wellman, 2003). Studies on effects of social capital examined economic outcomes such as success and incomes of immigrant-owned businesses, quality of jobs and welfare

utilization. The findings for business-ownership indicate minimal or no success (Bates, 1994; Caulkins & Peters, 2002; Marger, 2001) and no higher income (Aronson, 1991; Ooka, 2001) as a function of social capital usage. In terms of welfare utilization, findings showed that among working-age immigrants, welfare utilization was not influenced by the extent of intra-ethnic contact (Hao & Kawano, 2001). Overall, usage of intra-ethnic social capital was not found to be a very beneficial factor in immigrants' employment (Potocky-Tripodi, 2004).

The impact of a support network is another community level factor that has been studied. The network can include "family, friends, sponsors, merchants, immigration consultants, public organizations, media, workplace, place of worship, and N.G.O.s" (Godin & Renaud, 2002, p. 113). These networks were shown to alleviate poverty, decrease the financial, social and psychological costs of immigration, and reduce the stresses of immigration and marginal social position (Angel & Tienda, 1982; Chavira-Prado, 1992; Jasinskaja-Lahti, Liebkind, Jaakkola, & Reuter, 2006; Menjívar, 1997). In some cases these networks hindered immigrants' long-term adjustment by sometimes impeding immigrants' entry into the mainstream society (Hugo, 1994a, 1994b; Pohjola, 1991). In an investigation of household networks and their function in employment success among recent immigrants in the United States, it was shown that co-residence with recent immigrants had beneficial effects on employment which were gendered with women's employment specifically (Enchautegui, 2002). However, sharing a dwelling with working immigrants who arrived more than four years prior was not found to be conducive to good employment

outcomes. In addition, higher levels of prestige among those in the network and the level of knowledge about the labour market opportunities help increase the effectiveness of the network at successful job placement (Enchautegui, 2002).

Some research has shed light on behaviours that are influenced by community group norms. Previous research found support for Theory of Planned Behaviour to predict job search behaviour (Caska, 2006; Van Ryn & Vinokur, 1992). Van Hooft et al. (2004) investigated and compared job search behaviour and its predictors among ethnic minorities as well as a majority group. The authors developed hypotheses about ethnic minority job search behaviour by combining cultural norms, which reflect cultural values, and the theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 1985; 1991). They hypothesized that ethnic minority members' job search intentions would be influenced more by their ethnic groups' norms regarding job search than by their individual job search attitudes. The findings showed that job search attitude and subjective norm were significant predictors of job search intention, and job search intention significantly predicted job search behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). As will be seen later, Sri Lankan Sinhalese norms foster employment behaviours. In this manner, job search attitudes and group norms of an ethnic minority group influence a group member's job search behaviour. Thus, it is necessary to consider the impact of these immigration, social, gender, racial, and community contextual factors when examining immigrant women's employment processes in a host country.

Individual factors. At the individual level, the psychological significance of employment, level of motivation, work ethic, acculturation, self-efficacy

(Bandura, 1982), burdens of parenting, and socioeconomic status played a role in employment and will be elaborated next.

Unemployment represents a stressful life event which has cumulative psychological effects alongside other stressful life events accompanying immigration. Unemployment is likely to have "emotional, psychological and behavioural corollaries of disrupted or confused meaning, identity, affiliation, and negative feelings of self-esteem" (Herr & Cramer, 1996, p. 94). Unemployment changes social roles, relationships, daily routines, and very importantly, central aspects of the perception of the self and others (Kieselbach, 1988; Kieselbach & Svensson, 1988; Schwefel, 1986; Schwefel, Svensson & Zollner, 1987; Ying & Akutsu, 1995). Job dissatisfaction is associated with "psychosomatic illnesses, depression, anxiety, impaired interpersonal relationships, alcoholism, and suicide" (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984, p. 291). Clearly, unemployment is a negative event which can place significant stress on an individual.

Immigration is typically accompanied by deeply-held hopes and wishes for a better life and improved living conditions. Researchers suggest that employment-related issues are the main indicators of immigrants' adjustment to a host society (Majka & Mullan, 1992; Weiner, 1996). Satisfactory employment is associated with self-esteem, job involvement, commitment to the organization, productivity, improved morale, life satisfaction, and physical and mental health (Conger, Conger, Elder, Lonrenz, Simons, & Whitbeck, 1992; Dawis & Lofquist, 1984). Meaningful work contributes to the sense of fulfillment through mastery of self and the environment as well as to the sense that one is valued by society

(Lee & Westwood, 1996; O'Toole, 1981). Mastery of self and environment obtained through satisfactory employment would be particularly helpful for immigrants whose sense of competence and efficacy are challenged in a new and unfamiliar environment. Thus, obtaining satisfactory employment validates the hope experienced in the early stages of migration, but the inability to meet vocational goals can result in frustration, depression, and anxiety.

Motivation, work ethic, and educational training and work experience were examined in Xu's (2006) qualitative study of Chinese immigrant women who held graduate degrees and many of whom had several years of work experience in professional positions. The study revealed that only a very small number experienced success finding work in their field at their former level of employment. Factors that influenced their occupational success included language skills in English, immigration status as principal applicant, family support for domestic and childcare work, and an optimistic personality. Xu (2006) concluded that systemic and individual barriers had varying influences on these highly-educated, skilled professionals.

A number of studies on immigrant women's occupational choice emphasize the role of self-efficacy beliefs, socioeconomic status, and acculturation (Castelino, 2004; Tang, Fouad, & Smith, 1999; Van Hooft, Born, Taris, & van der Flier, 2004) and will be discussed next.

Self-efficacy, defined as individual beliefs about the chances of success in various sectors of the job market (Bandura, 1982) influences occupational choice and employment success. Tang et al. (1999) conducted a large-scale study of the

factors affecting South Asians' occupational preferences. Castelino (2004) conducted a large-scale replication of the Tang et al. (1999) study and validated some pathways of the model proposed to explain the career choices of Asian Americans. The model was specifically tested on male and female South Asian Americans who migrated from Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka who were employed or pursuing graduate or professional degrees. These studies propose a model which may be helpful to understand the career identity of immigrant women. The model was derived from the Social Cognitive Career Theory of Lent, Brown, and Hackett (1996). This model posits that individuals' levels of acculturation, socioeconomic status, and family involvement are contextual influences that influence their self-efficacy beliefs and interest in traditional or nontraditional occupations. The model also hypothesizes that self-efficacy beliefs and areas of interest will strongly relate to the choices that participants make while the contextual factors of acculturation, socioeconomic status, and family involvement will also play a role in their choices. Castelino's (2004) replication study eliminated interests as a contextual factor as it did not have an influence on career choices, while self-efficacy and contextual factors of levels of acculturation, family involvement, and family socioeconomic status were maintained and caste was added as it did have an impact on choice. Self-efficacy beliefs about occupational success were also found to be important in academic success of Indo-Canadian immigrant children (Klassen, 2004), supporting the importance of this factor in occupational choice of immigrants from South Asia.

To conclude, some research showed that human capital, gender and certain indicators of acculturation were the most significant factors affecting immigrant economic adaptation in the U.S. (Chiswick, Cohen & Zach, 1997; James, Romine & Terry, 2002; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001; Potocky-Tripodi, 2003). Factors such as perceived discrimination, degree of ethnic identity, desire to acculturate, governmental and societal reception, occupational status, unemployment rates, economic opportunities, and concentration of other ethnic communities were reported to play little or no role in the economic integration of immigrants (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001; Potocky-Tripodi, 2001, 2003).

Career Identity of Sri Lankan Immigrant Women

Immigrant women from various cultural groups present a range of employment-related values, career identities, and career aspirations based on their employment socialization and ethnic values. Sri Lankan nationals have been immigrating to Canada and consistently ranked in the top ten immigrating countries (Hyndman, 2003). The average age of women's marriage was 25 years (De Silva, 1993). Sri Lankans may be perceived as being a homogenous group; however, significant differences exist among Sri Lankans based on ethnic group membership, religious affiliation, socio-economic class/caste, and education, to name a few delineators.

Ethnic group influences are also likely to play a strong role in Sri Lankan women's employment behaviours. In Sri Lanka, two major ethnic groups are present: Sinhalese and Tamil. The Sinhalese ethnic group represents approximately 82% of the Sri Lankan population and the Tamil ethnic group

represents approximately 9% of the Sri Lankan population (Department of Census and Statistics, 2001). The Sinhalese population is primarily Buddhist and the Tamil population is either Hindu or Roman Catholic. Historically, the Sinhalese culture was a more liberal culture, where women had greater social freedoms, and Tamil culture was more conservative, and Tamil women were tied to more traditional roles in society and in the family (Attanapola, 2004; Malhotra & Degraff, 1997; Rajasingham-Senanayake, 2004). However, the civil war and transnational migration resulted in many demographic changes, resulting in women from both ethnic groups becoming heads of households and primary breadwinners and changing existing gender roles (Attanapola, 2004; Malhotra & Degraff, 1997; Rajasingham-Senanayake, 2004). Because of these particular cultural, religious, socioeconomic, and gender contexts, English-speaking Sri Lankan Sinhalese women of middle socio-economic status have developed strong career desires and hopes. Given that their career trajectory is disrupted by migration, it is likely that their career identity and psychological well-being are affected. Therefore, studying this ethnic group of Sri Lankan immigrant women can provide rich information about impact of immigration on the career identity development of immigrant women.

Factors Shaping Sri Lankan Women's Career Identity

Gender socialization. Asian cultures vary considerably in the social mores and gender roles that are ascribed to men and women. In most of South Asia, patrilineal and patrilocal household patterns are predominant (Espiritu, 1999). For example, North India, Pakistan and Bangladesh follow this pattern,

which is characterized by isolation and subordination of women through early marriages and strict rules of patrilocal residence (Malhotra & Mather, 1997). Malhotra and Degraff (1997) suggest that Sri Lanka follows a different cultural pattern in Asia, which is characterized by greater access to education and later marriages. Ethnographic studies in Sri Lanka document matrilineal descent and uxorilocal marriages – where husbands live with their wives' family - among ethnic groups, for example among Tamils and Moors (McGilvray, 1989). This domestic organization pattern provides a greater level of female autonomy and influence compared to that of women in patrilineal or patrilocal households (McGilvray, 1989). This pattern has been documented among the Tamil ethnic group. Due to the more liberal heritage of the Sinhalese ethnic group, it is likely to be equally or more applicable to that ethnic group. The average age at marriage has been rising and co-occurs with longer periods required for education and establishing a stable career prior to marriage (De Silva, 2008). These differences in socialization and domestic organization among Asian countries highlight a relatively higher level of autonomy in Sri Lankan women's roles and favour positive attitudes towards women's employment.

Education. Overall, Sri Lankans have a relatively good level of education, skills, and literacy as indicated by youth literacy rates (95.6%), adult literacy rates (90.4%) and education levels (98% of children in grade 1 children can expect to reach grade 5) (United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], 2005). Sri Lanka has a cultural heritage of relative gender equality with regard to education (Malhotra & Tsui, 1999). Women's literacy rates (88.6%) are close to

par with men's literacy rates (92.2%) (UNDP, 2002) and women have slightly higher enrolment rates in secondary school (Central Bank of Sri Lanka, 1990; Jayaweera, 1990; World Bank, 1994). The literacy rate tops those of other Asian nations such as India (65.3%), Pakistan (48.7%) and Cambodia (73.6%) (UNDP, 2005). Sri Lankan women tend to be well-educated and attend university or technical college (Attanapola, 2004; Department of Census & Statistics, 1998; Malhotra & Tsui, 1999). Considerable gender equity in educational levels due to governmental policies produced a relatively well-educated female labour force (Malhotra & Mather, 1997).

In Sri Lanka, the educational system is similar to the British educational system due to the implementation of the British educational system during British colonization (Ministry of Education of Sri Lanka, 2009). In this system, students' primary schooling is based on a national curriculum which is completed at age ten. They then pursue secondary education from ages 11 to 16. During this period, they identify their desired profession and select relevant subjects which would prepare them for the occupation of their choice. During the last two years they study for and write the General Certificate of Secondary Education (G.C.S.E.) Ordinary Level examinations in a particular stream (e.g., sciences, fine arts). The G.C.S.E. is the equivalent of the Quebec high school diploma. Those wishing to apply to national or international universities or technical schools will study for two more years, usually ages 16 to 17, and write the General Certificate of Education Advanced Level examinations. This is equivalent to CEGEP level studies in Quebec. Those who obtain the highest marks gain entrance to Sri

Lankan universities or institutions of higher education overseas. Others may pursue higher education at the Open University of Sri Lanka, which was established for those in the workforce to study part-time, or at private institutes.

Education, which is highly valued in Sri Lanka, is an extremely valuable commodity and a high source of social recognition. Despite the establishment of more universities after 1980, it has been estimated that the Sri Lankan university system is only able to accommodate about 20% of the annual eligible students (Wijayratne, 2006) and that nearly 60% of students pursue higher education in external degree programs due to space limitations in the highly coveted university system (Aturupane, 2010). In addition, there were university closures in 1987-1988 due to student disruptions that generated a backlog in entrance to university education (Matthews, 1995) and increased competition for university entrance. As a result, university education became restricted to only the most outstanding students. As a result of this educational context, education and professional experience are very difficult to obtain and are highly cherished.

While undergraduate studies were offered by universities in Sri Lanka, post-graduate programs are offered only by a few universities in Sri Lanka (Aturupane et al., 2009; Ministry of Education of Sri Lanka, 2009). Thus, a ceiling exists such that undergraduate studies were the highest level of studies that could be pursued in Sri Lanka and entrance was extremely limited. To promote graduate training, the Sri Lankan government offers an extremely limited number of scholarships to pursue graduate studies overseas.

Employment. A few studies examined Sri Lankan women's attitudes towards employment and found that Sri Lankan young women were strongly inclined towards employment, planned on continuing to be employed after marriage (Attanapola, 2004; Eyre, Jayawickrama, Guneratne, & Samithadasa, 2001; Jayaweera & Shanmugan, 2001; Malhotra, 1991; Malhotra & Tsui, 1999), and have traditionally contributed financially to their family (Attanapola, 2004; Malhotra, 1991), especially in the case of women from middle to low socioeconomic status (Malhotra & Mather, 1997). Further, middle and upper socioeconomic class women have more freedom to choose work that meets personal as well as financial needs. They also have access to better job opportunities due to higher levels of education and better employment information while women from lower socioeconomic strata find the income from garment industrial sector jobs enables them to support their families better than through rural or agricultural work (Malhotra & Mather, 1997).

Economy. While many unmarried women of previous generations remained at home, since the 1970s, more unmarried women were showing strong interest in employment and were entering the job market to support aging parents and younger siblings (Ahooja-Patel, 1986; Malhotra & Mather, 1997). Economic liberalization policies, which began in 1977 and represented a fundamental change in economic policy, increased capitalist and foreign investment in the socialist state, and led to a burgeoning of jobs in the industrial sector (Jayanetti & Tilakaratna, 2005). The ideology of the male breadwinner was challenged by the need for dual sources of income and increases in women's employment rates

(Attanapola, 2004). The garment, textile, and other import-export industries experienced rapid growth, and were rapidly filled primarily by women (Central Bank of Sri Lanka, 2000; Department of Census and Statistics, 1998, 2001b; Jayaweera, 1990; Jayaweera & Shanmugam, 2001). In the context of overall economic duress that had been worsening during the civil war (Jayanetti & Tilakaratna, 2005), the specific growth of jobs in the industrial sector, where women were becoming employed in a greater proportion than men, resulted in an increasing number of women providing financial support to their families (Attanapola, 2004). Thus, these changes had a gradual but profound impact on gender roles in Sri Lanka, and as a result, working women from a wide range of socio-economic classes gained recognition within their communities through employment (Attanapola, 2004).

Nonetheless, though the economic decline since the beginning of the civil war hindered employment across the genders, women's employment rates increased while men's decreased slightly (Malhotra & Mather, 1997). Families appear to be very supportive of their daughters' education and employment. For a Sri Lankan woman, having a career is considered an asset for marriage (Malhotra & Mather, 1997). As more women were joining the labour force and some were becoming primary earners, they also increasingly became decision-makers within families, changing the dynamic of the distribution of power between spouses and within the family (Attanapola, 2004). This distribution of power becomes normative and changes to this role resulting from loss of employment after migration can generate strife between spouses (Darvishpour, 2002). In addition, it

can be emotionally-distressing for a previously-employed woman to experience a reduction in power and decision-making authority after migration (Darvishpour, 2002).

As seen in the comparison of national demographic indicators of South and Central Asian nations, Sri Lanka shows the best indicators for women's overall well-being and education of all South Asian nations (De Silva, 2008). The sociocultural indicators demonstrate equal access to education and likely power to negotiate career and life choices. Some of these indicators include the higher rate of women's school completion compared to men's, the late average age of marriage for women which is attributed to lengthy education, and the highest rate of female-headed households attributed to social and economic changes (De Silva, 2008). Taken together, they portray relative power, education, and control which translate into employment choice and career orientation.

Employment Experiences of Sri Lankan Immigrant Women

The Canadian census (Statistics Canada, 2001) reveals that Sri Lankan immigrants have lower earnings in comparison to immigrants from all countries. It is not known whether these reflect higher unemployment rates or dependence on social assistance due to labour market integration difficulties. Poor employment is an additional stressor and has been shown to increase the risk of depression in immigrant women (Man, 2004; Rumbaut, 1985). The effects of underemployment are likely to be especially problematic for Sri Lankan immigrant women, as they already experience acculturative stress and multiple

losses linked to migration, and therefore are more vulnerable to depression and other mental health issues.

While migration is usually expected to result in better employment opportunities, the inability to tap into these opportunities may trigger negative affect for women who were employed prior to migration, and for women who expected to be employed after migrating. Given the increasing importance of the role of employee and independent worker for Sri Lankan women (Attanapola, 2004), failure to obtain employment in the field they are trained for can constitute a major disappointment. Further, disillusionment may occur both with regard to resettlement in Quebec and with themselves as viable workers in the Quebec labour market (Man, 2004). The previous sections presented the significance of employment as a part of Sri Lankan women's identity and its potential implications. Research has not yet examined how the employment expectations and attitudes of Sri Lankan women interrelate with their employment experiences in Quebec. Given the importance of employment in their identity, and the importance of employment in refugee resettlement and mental and physical well-being, it may be conceived that difficulties with employment-seeking will affect this group of immigrant women more negatively than immigrant women for whom employment is not an essential part of their identity.

Impediments to Sri Lankan Immigrant Women's Employment

Although professionally-employed Sri Lankan women are primed to enter the workforce of the host country, anecdotal evidence shows that they experience higher unemployment and underemployment compared to their employment in

Sri Lanka. It is necessary to understand the factors that contribute to this discrepancy between their motivation and preparation to work, and their actual outcomes, particularly during the initial years post-migration.

Linguistically, Sri Lanka has two official languages: Sinhala and Tamil. The English language has a strong history in Sri Lanka, due to the implementation of English in educational, governmental and scientific institutions during Sri Lanka's colonization by the British. Its presence remained after Sri Lanka obtained its independence from the British in 1947. Today, English is widely used for educational, commercial and scientific purposes in Sri Lanka, and many Sri Lankan immigrants to Canada have sufficient mastery of the language to integrate the workforce in Canada. However, French is not a language taught in the public school system in Sri Lanka and is rarely spoken by native Sri Lankans. When Sri Lankan immigrants settle in Quebec, a province where the official language is French and where government, legal, and administrative functions are conducted in French, this presents a challenge for Sri Lankan immigrants' adjustment and employment. The Quebec government privileges the use of French and immigrant integration into a French-speaking society (Godin & Renaud, 2002).

Another major barrier for Sri Lankan immigrants is the lack of recognition of prior education and work experience. Anecdotal evidence shows that equivalence procedures by the Quebec Minister of Education tend to underrate foreign education, thus it is not unusual for a foreign university degree to be recognized as equivalent to a Quebec high school degree education (Canadian

Task Force on Mental Health of Immigrants and Refugees, 1988). This may engender a significant loss of status for well-educated women. They are often forced to seek employment in entry-level positions that do not require post-secondary studies or work experience (Beiser, 1999; Xu, 2006). For these reasons, integration into the workforce can be emotionally and psychologically difficult for Sri Lankan immigrants in Quebec.

Another impediment for Sri Lankan immigrant women in the workforce is that they are a visible minority. Their attachment to an ethnic minority and their level of ethnic attachment are assumed based on externally visible variables such as skin color, accented spoken English and ethnic garb. Ethnic attachment incurs costs and may have greater consequences for women compared to men, due to ethnospecific discriminatory attitudes among employers, gender-specific earning differentials, or gender and ethnospecific expectations of labour force participation (Reitz & Sklar, 1997). The consequence of visible ethnic attachment may be that mainstream employers assume Sri Lankan immigrant women are less acculturated to western values, such as women's work, and therefore less likely to consider them as candidates for available positions. These barriers may also funnel immigrant women into enclave employment, for example in textile and other factories, for which they are stereotypically viewed as being good candidates (Reitz & Sklar, 1997). However, jobs in ethnic enclaves have economic costs such as limited mobility and limited access to mainstream employment.

To summarize, Sri Lankan immigrant women have multiple impediments to obtaining employment commensurate with their previous training or experience and to retrain. Given the importance of financial autonomy to support their families, the value of education, their personal career aspirations, the significance of employment to their global identity, and the multiple losses experienced during migration, Sri Lankan immigrant women are likely to be at a higher risk for depression and lowered self-esteem. Ironically, due to their visible ethnic minority status, they are also vulnerable to acculturation difficulties and to difficulties with labour market integration.

Critical Review of Research and Theory

The research and theory presented earlier have certain shortcomings which will be discussed here. Among these are the lack of fit of career transition research, lack of recognition of sociological and economic contexts, lack of consideration of magnitude of simultaneous changes, use of male or dominant culture female models, confounding of ethnocultural groups, and need for attention to ethnospecific factors.

Studies on career transitions cannot provide much insight into the career transition and identity of immigrants for several reasons. In their meta-analysis, Kanfer, Wanberg, and Kantrowitz (2001) concluded that the vast majority of existing research investigated job search behaviour among employees who lost their jobs and among college graduates. Thus, there are limits to how the findings of the studies can be applied to immigrants who may have voluntarily left their jobs in order to migrate. Similarly, in a review of career transition studies, Slay

(2006) found only 14% of studies examined career transitions to a different profession, which is a lower rate of transition to a different profession than anecdotal evidence demonstrates in the case of immigrant women. Immigrants' career changes occur within the context of other global life changes such as changes in citizenship, residence, socioeconomic status, and social and occupational network. Thus, the majority of existing literature on adaptation to role changes within an organization or a profession captures neither the extent of occupational change that occurs for immigrants nor the cumulative effects of the interaction between immigrants' resettlement and their career reorientation (Ebaugh, 1988). In addition, almost all the studies on career transitions examined intentional career transitions, involved some level of cognitive and affective preparation for change. In contrast, career changes and occupational transitions subsequent to migration are often imposed on the individual and rarely occur from personal choice. Therefore, the processes and factors involved in immigrant career transition vary considerably from those studied in the adult career transitions research, and are worthy of distinctive consideration.

Career transition research generally focuses on brief periods in time when career transitions occur (Slay, 2006). More longitudinal examination of career transitions is necessary to understand how these occupational changes influence career identity (Slay, 2006). Furthermore, the range and context of career behaviour that has been studied is too limited and needs to be expanded to include more career-related behaviours (Hackett & Lent, 1992). The career-related behaviours of immigrants may be more subtle, start at lower rungs of

employment, and take longer to yield career results. Widening the definitions of employment behaviours used by immigrants will provide a more comprehensive perspective on their employment processes. For example, tasks such as attending job search workshops, negotiating with family members for time to retrain, or engaging in volunteer work to gain access to the job market could be significant career-related behaviours for immigrants.

The career transition studies that examined changes in occupational field and job exits were conducted using both quantitative and qualitative approaches, which yielded a greater range of responses. While the processes reported in their findings were quite comprehensive, they provided little information regarding the circumstances and turning points that led individuals to take the final steps to intentionally exit from their roles and relationships. Further, the studies looked at men's experience or included both men and women, thereby muddying any distinctions in the processes of men's and women's career transitions.

From a larger sociological and economic perspective, none of the studies reviewed took into consideration the economic conditions of the location and time period, although some acknowledged that this was a factor to be considered. Including awareness of the economic conditions and the legal and sociological barriers to employment will reduce the pathologization of immigrant unemployment and underemployment. This lack of attention to socioeconomic factors in individual-centered theories, for example role exit theory (Ebaugh, 1988), are limited to intra-individual factors and do not reflect the impact of the social structures related to employment such as laws defining access to jobs,

salary schemes, job security, and accreditation processes in the host society. Thus such theories are unable to fully address the complex socioeconomic influences surrounding an individual's career identity evolution.

The magnitude of change, defined as the level of change (e.g., going outside one's industry or occupation), as well as the novel demands of the new career, such as values, knowledge, skills, and networks (DeFillippi & Arthur, 1994, 1996; Slay, 2006), are key aspect of career transitions which influence occupational success. For immigrants, the career change co-occurs with other life changes. This typically generates a greater burden of change for immigrants than for individuals who change careers within their city or country of origin. Therefore these are important factors to consider for immigrants' career development. Because studies which examined occupational change did not explore these changes in the context of migration, the findings may not be directly applicable to immigrant career transitions. To understand the career identity changes that occur for an immigrant worker, the contextual scope of the study and the range of career factors studied needs to be enlarged (Hackett & Lent, 1992).

The existing theories on immigrant women's career development use male models or are based on dominant group women's career development. When it comes to immigrants, while there are shared experiences between men and women, there are also differences specifically related to gender (Espiritu, 1999; Lacroix, 2004; Matsuoka & Sorensen, 1991). Still, most studies have focused on men or have combined results of men and women immigrants (Godin & Renaud, 2002; Lacroix, 2004; Renaud, Piché, & Godin, 2003). Cultural validity is defined

as relating to the "construct, concurrent, and predictive validity of theories and models for culturally different individuals" (Leong & Brown, 1995, p. 144). If the knowledge base is established on the study of only certain cultural groups, then its cultural validity is brought into question (Leong & Brown, 1995, p. 144). As mentioned earlier, vocational research and theories based on dominant cultural groups and on men may not have cultural validity or applicability to culturally different individuals. Further, gender and ethnicity interact to make women of minority ethnic groups more vulnerable to unemployment and the effects of unemployment. Therefore, research focusing on specific ethnicities among immigrant women can be more helpful.

Some studies on immigrants examine the experiences of immigrants from cultural groups living in a geographical location as one unit, thereby falling into the cultural uniformity trap which minimizes within group differences and exaggerates cultural stereotypes of group differences (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1996). Assuming that cultural groups are similar based on geographical proximity can be erroneous, as South Asian cultures vary noticeably on career values (Herr & Cramer, 1996). This aggregation disguises the fact that Asian women have different socio-cultural attitudes, roles, and expectations of employment. For example, some cultural heritages encourage women's career development while others do not (Attanapola, 2004; Blau & Beller, 1988; Carlson & Swartz, 1988; Lee & Westwood, 1996; Potocky-Tripodi, 2004). A survey of recent research on Asian immigrant women's employment in North America shows that research on immigrant women's occupations has primarily focused on domestic work and sex

work (Ehrenreich & Hochschild, 2003; Oishi, 2002; Sassen, 2000). However, findings indicate that immigrant women are employed in a wide range of domains (Rakhsha, 1999; Yeoh & Huang, 2000). Asian women also have a wide range of knowledge, skills and resources; thus some women are more knowledgeable and well-connected to support and resources while others are in a weaker position when approaching the labour market (Lee & Westwood, 1996). Further, categorizing immigrants by broad racial groups that are not ethnicity-specific, and merging the gender data muddles important distinctions in career behaviour and employment patterns (Bean, Leach, & Lowell, 2004). As in all these cases, unwarranted aggregation needs to be re-examined and appropriate comparisons and analyses need to be conducted.

Furthermore, a review of the vocational research and theory on racial and ethnic minorities reveals several weaknesses from a multicultural perspective. Leong and Brown (1995) reviewed the vocational research conducted on racial and ethnic minorities. Their findings were that the study samples were not sufficiently culturally diverse and that the constructs used were not culturally-relevant. The critiques of career theories include being based on American middle-class males and founded on European American cultural values which results in being insensitive to sociopolitical and psychological experiences of racial and ethnic minorities (Carter & Cook, 1992). By being uninformed about the economic and social contexts in which racial and ethnic minorities exist, they also ignored cultural institutions that promote and support racial and ethnic minorities' vocational talents (Carter & Cook, 1992). Critiques of major career

development theories include impediments to career theory development for racial and ethnic minorities including researcher focus on concepts and assumptions such as "dignity of work", the existence of a "free and open labor market" with a variety of career choices, (Fitzgerald & Betz, 1994; Leong, 1995; Naidoo, 1998) and a "planfulness about one's career development" (Byars & McCubbin, 2001, p. 634). These concepts fail to recognize the limitations and interplay between the immigrant employee and the restrictions imposed by both the environment and time.

Using a multicultural perspective, sensitivity to the issues specific to cultural groups must be maintained. Some ethnospecific factors that constrain immigrant women's employment choices stem directly from cultural directives, such as prescriptions about suitable occupations, hours of employment, or location of work. Comparison of immigrant women's career development with the invisible norm of Caucasian North American women is detrimental to understanding and valuing alternative trajectories of career development among immigrant women. Therefore, the assumptions inherent in any career model must be made explicit and care taken to avoid inappropriate comparisons between immigrant women and non-immigrant women. Another difference that needs further exploration is the presence of individual differences within a specific ethnocultural group of immigrants. Such within group differences may be attributed to varying levels of acculturation, for example, which mediate some immigrant women's employment decisions. Though some researchers have taken into account levels of acculturation (Berry, 2001), others have grouped recent

immigrants with established second generation Asian Americans which conceals individual differences in the cultural norms that prevail for each generation of immigrant.

Rationale for the Study

Only a few studies have examined the employment of specific ethnic groups in Quebec (Renaud et al., 2003). Each ethnocultural group carries ethnospecific values about employment, women's work, and the importance of career identity. This may have implications for how they experience resettlement and employment in Quebec, as well as implications for the use of mental health facilities in Quebec. Of the studies that focused on the employment of immigrants of specific ethnic groups in Quebec, the focus was on refugees from Indochina (Deschamps, 1985) and Southeast Asia (Dorais, 1989; Dorais, Pilon-Lê, Quy Bong, Huy, & Kaley, 1984; Lam, 1996). Widening the scope of this body of knowledge on Asian immigrant women's employment by studying Sri Lankan immigrant women's employment and career will add new data to the body of research.

Migration has a significant impact on women's career development, particularly on those who experience sudden or forced migration (e.g., refugees). Their employment terminates abruptly, and their social capital (e.g., employment network contacts) and qualifications become unusable. Letters of recommendation and proofs of education are not typically secured prior to migration. In addition, resettlement, retraining, and language fluency issues arise for immigrants resettling in Quebec, making the return to an established career

path very daunting. Despite this reality, existing research does not describe the effects of migration on the career identity development of women. Migration may be a significant impediment to continuation of an established career path yet simultaneously offering a wider range of occupational possibilities.

Culturally relevant frameworks for career development that are more applicable to immigrants need to be developed. Most reviewers of career theories recommend that more research be focused on diverse groups and socioeconomic factors (Brown et al., 1996). Swanson (1995) stated that the careers of ethnic minorities were underrepresented in the research. Therefore research specifically focusing on immigrant women's career development will contribute to the gap in the research and theory knowledge bases. Most academic research on immigrant career focuses on that of skilled immigrant men (Raghuram & Kofman, 2004) or unskilled work of immigrant women (Ehrenreich & Hochschild, 2003; Oishi, 2002; Sassen, 2000). Yet, the career development of skilled immigrant women appears rarely in dominant narratives of migration, despite findings that their employment experiences are different from those of skilled men and of less-skilled women (Raghuram & Kofman, 2004). Even among immigrants selected specifically for their high educational achievement, work experience and financial resources, many skilled immigrant women face systemic and individual barriers to employment (Xu, 2006), thus the impact thereof on career identity development merits attention. In sum, there is a shortage of research on the career development of skilled Asian immigrant women. Given that many Sri Lankan

women represent a group of skilled immigrant women, research on their career development can begin to address that gap.

The evolution of career identities for immigrants is a process that is influenced by a multiplicity of factors such as individual, community, and systemic factors. Attempts to understand immigrants' situations can benefit from considering each of these perspectives. Given the myriad ways of approaching and understanding this phenomenon of career identity development, this review and synthesis of existing literature provides a number of useful approaches for gaining a better understanding of a very unique group of individuals: Sri Lankan women immigrating to Quebec.

This study will fill a niche in the literature by consideration for these overlooked factors, and by taking a qualitative approach that gives voice to the lived experiences of Sri Lankan immigrant women who have gone through the journey of leaving their country of origin and resettling in a new country. By examining the process of career identity development of these women, this study hopes to shed light on a key group of individuals who have become part of Canada's cultural mosaic.

Chapter III: Methodology

Proposed Research Objectives

The primary research objective of this study is to understand how the career identities of Sri Lankan immigrant women have evolved as a result of their employment experiences after immigrating to a French-speaking Canadian province. The research questions guiding this study are the following: (a) What were the career identities of Sri Lankan immigrant women prior to immigrating to Canada?; (b) How do Sri Lankan immigrant women's career identities evolve as a result of their job-search and employment experiences?; and (c) What do Sri Lankan immigrant women think and feel about the evolution of their career identities? The following sections will present the methodology used to address these questions, along with the data collection method, and participant information.

Adopting a Constructivist Approach

Most traditional career theories are based on positivistic premises. Defined as "the epistemological doctrine that physical and social reality is independent of those who observe it" (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1998, p. 18), positivism is founded on the assumption that there exists an objective reality, and that the intention is to make an unbiased observation of this external world part of the scientific inquiry. In contrast to this stance, an increasing number of researchers are interested in and are adopting a constructivist lens when conducting career research (Collin & Young, 1986; Hoshmand, 1989; Lincoln & Guba, 2000; Wilber, 1989). Defined as "the epistemological doctrine that social reality is

constructed and that it is constructed differently by different individuals" (Gall et al., 1996, p. 19), constructivism operates on the assumption that individuals create their own identities and elements of their surroundings. This philosophical perspective is based on principles that view people as actively constructing their own realities, rather than passively submitting to a given reality (Brown et al., 1996; Wilber, 1989). Human behaviour is thus best understood in context due to the subjective frame of reference (Brown et al., 1996; Wilber, 1989). Researchers who adopt this perspective acknowledge the possibility of a multiplicity of realities that are made by individuals as they interact with others (Gall et al., 1996).

In adhering to constructivist principles, a qualitative research approach was deemed appropriate for this study due to the following reasons. First, there is currently no comprehensive theoretical framework to help explain the development of career identity in immigrant women. Developing such a framework depends on the existence of research studies that focus on understanding the personal and nuanced experiences of individuals. A qualitative research approach enables the researcher to obtain detailed data as well as contextual information within which to situate the data. Second, it is critical to comprehend the participant's subjective frames of reference as closely as possible, as these frames are the lenses through which participants understand their experiences - like employment - and make decisions about careers (Wilber, 1989). Finally, a common precept of qualitative research is taking an inductive approach, where the data helps create a conceptual framework that will help

explain a given phenomenon. As mentioned previously, given the current lack of a useful and meaningful conceptual framework to understand the situation of immigrant women in Montreal, a qualitative research approach is deemed appropriate to collect rich data regarding Sri Lankan immigrant women's career identity.

Rationale for Adopting a Narrative Methodology

A narrative methodology was adopted for this qualitative study because its central assumption is that individuals represent their lives and identities through the stories they tell (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007; Sfard & Prusak, 2005). The strength of narratives lies in their inherent meanings and in their power to shape and maintain an individual's identity (McAdams, 1985; Polkinghorne, 1988; Sfard & Prusak, 2005). The psychology of narratives is concerned with the structure, content, and function of stories told by individuals (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Murray, 2003). In addition, individuals undergoing transitions often make sense of themselves and their experience through narratives. Through an examination of narrative content and function, it is believed that the underlying psychological constructs (i.e., career identity) can be ascertained. Given that the primary goal of this study is to explore changes in Sri Lankan immigrant women's career identity and career development before and after migrating to Quebec, a narrative approach allows the researcher to examine the evolution of such changes in career identity over time. As McAdams (1985) notes:

> An individual's story has the power to tie together past, present and future in his or her life. It is a story that is able to provide

> unity and purpose…Identity stability is the longitudinal consistency in the life story. Identity transformation – identity crisis, identity change – is story revision…(p. 19).

Two definitional aspects of narratives are causation and temporal sequence which are vital to providing a "coherent causal account of an event that has occurred or is about to occur" (Murray, 2003, p. 98). Hence, the narratives women share about their careers are important illustrations of their unfolding career identity.

Another distinguishing feature of narratives is that they are social constructions that are developed and shaped by ongoing social interactions. Narratives are used to negotiate one's personal position in the context of dominant social narratives (Murray, 2000; Ricoeur, 1991) and are dialogical in nature, consisting of the dialogue between internal (individual) and the external (social) contexts. Because of the career-related interactions immigrant women have with others and their internal interpretations of these interactions, the dialogical underpinning of narratives is useful for understanding immigrant women's career identity development.

A narrative methodology can also give voice to immigrant women's understanding of their experiences. This is important as Western models of career identity development cannot account for immigrant women's career development and career identity (Brown et al., 1996; Lent et al., 1996; Leong & Gim-Chung, 1995). Because the study examines an important aspect of self-concept — career identity — the researcher must search for reflective narratives as well as narratives which best represent participants' experiences and self-reflections (i.e.,

narratives where the participant played a central role in the story and narratives recounting their understanding of themselves). Therefore, a narrative methodology is an intuitive approach for tapping into participants' self-perceptions about their career identity. In conclusion, narratives are a privileged method of learning about identity and identity change that occur as a result of individual meaning-making and interpersonal interactions.

Structure of a narrative. Four dimensions of narratives can be used as lenses for analyzing these women's narratives. The human aspect is captured by personal and social interactions, the temporal evolution is depicted through past, present, and future points in time, and the situation is reflected by geographical place and era (Dewey, 1929). In addition, individuals' inward focus is captured by feelings and morals and their outward focus is demonstrated by environmental conditions and contextual factors (Clandinin & Connelly, 1988). In this study, the narratives were read for the four dimensions which were explored in the following manner. Participant narratives were examined for the intrapersonal, (e.g., thoughts), the interpersonal (e.g., conversations with other immigrant women), and interactions within institutions (e.g., interactions with interviewers and other employees). The continuity dimension was captured through exploration of their past, present and future projections of their career identity. For the situation dimension, the larger contexts of their work experiences (e.g., the economic and social context in Quebec) were attended to. Lastly, internal aspects (e.g., feelings, hopes, and beliefs regarding career identity and self-efficacy) as well as

external factors (e.g., sources of income and emotional support during resettlement and career transition) also were examined within the narratives.

Data collection method. The study used narrative interviewing to collect the data. In this method, the interviewer uses a question on a topic of interest to stimulate the interviewee to tell a story about a significant aspect or events in their life. When the interviewee stops, additional questions based on the interviewee's narrative are presented (Bauer, 1996). In a more traditional form of narrative inquiry, an entire life history would be obtained; however, because the post-migration resettlement period is the primary focus of this study, the episodic interview, which is a time frame-limited form of a narrative inquiry, was used (Alasuutari, 1995; Flick, 2002). The episodic interview is appropriate for the study because it focuses on a specific developmental event (e.g., becoming a physician, or leaving home). Episodic memory, is a form of autobiographical memory that is "context bound, refers to times and places, and is closely associated with the experience of remembering" (Conway, 1990, pp. 3-4). Further, the episodic interview used in this study was informed by concepts of the "three-series interview" process used by Seidman (2006) but was limited to two interviews. In this process, attention is given to the initial context of the women's career evolution experiences, specifically their career development in Sri Lanka, followed by the details of their career development processes post-migration; and finally by the anticipated future career development as well as reflection on the meaning of their overall career development.

Narrative interviews are very open-ended and have very little structure so that participants can raise issues they want to discuss. Thus, data collection took place through interviews based on the following prompts that tapped into career identity changes that participants' experienced over time:

1. Please describe the way you used to see yourself as a worker, employee, and/or professional prior to immigrating to Canada, (i.e., former career identity).
    a. Please elaborate on your career goals prior to immigrating to Canada.
2. Please describe how your identity as worker, employee, and/or professional evolved as a result of your experiences with work since arriving in Canada, (i.e., changes to career identity).
3. Please describe your current view of yourself as a worker, employee, and/or financial professional and how you feel about this, (i.e., feelings about career identity change).
    a. Please elaborate on your current career goals.

A central element of a retrospective focus is the reliance on long-term memory for recollections of events, experiences, thoughts and feeling. Autobiographical memory is of "significance for the self, for emotions, and for the experience of personhood, that is, for the experience of enduring as an individual, in a culture, over time" (Conway & Pleydell-Pearce, 2000, p. 261). Such memories have "an emotional impact or provide a motivational explanation for later developments" (Bluck & Habermas, 2000, p. 122). More specifically,

autobiographical memory can be seen as serving three functions: (a) developing the self, (b) maintaining social relations with others, and (c) planning for present and future behaviours. Through these functions, the self is developed and maintained over time. Regarding social interactions, autobiographical memory permits the sharing of personal memories that can create a sense of intimacy and social bonding. The directive function of autobiographical memory allows individuals to "to ask new questions of old information in order to solve problems in the present, and to predict future events" (Bluck, 2003, p. 115). When describing inherent constraints of autobiographical memory, Conway (1990) asserts that they "may be accurate without being literal and may represent the personal meaning of an event at the expense of accuracy" (p. 9). While this may seem to be a weakness of relying on autobiographical memory for research purposes, any errors in remembering "do not violate the meaning of the recalled episode; in fact, if anything they seem to emphasize the meaning" (Conway, 1990, p. 11).

Participants

There were several inclusion criteria used to recruit participants for this study. First, Sri Lankan women from any category of immigration were included in this study. Participants from various categories (i.e., refugee, economic immigrant, family reunification) undergo immigration processes of different lengths and levels of complication, and involve different individual barriers and resources that likely affect career development. Currently, it is unknown whether

differences in career identity development between these categories exist after migration. For this reason, the study included all types of immigrants.

Second, participants needed to have immigrated to Montreal two or more years ago. Even though participants from various immigrant categories were included in the study, refugees are likely to be engaged in legal proceedings, lasting a median of 22 months post arrival (Godin & Renaud, 2002). Thus, it was likely that refugees would not have had work experience other than unreported work ("under the table work") within their first two years of arriving in Canada. Therefore, a minimum stay of two years was chosen as an inclusion criterion to enable this subgroup to obtain some employment and re-training experiences (Sinacore, Mikhail, Kassan, & Lerner, 2009).

Third, participants needed to have Canadian permanent resident status and be legal candidates for work. Participants also needed to have been on the job market in Canada for one year or more in order to have had sufficient time to make attempts to enter into the career of their choice or to have had time to consider retraining options. It was believed that these post-immigration career experiences would shape their career identity development. In addition, participants needed to have previous work experience in Sri Lanka or another foreign country prior to migrating to Canada as individuals are unlikely to have developed a strong career identity without work experience.

All participants had to be Sinhalese for several reasons. First, Sri Lankan Sinhalese cultural values encourage women to be employed – making these women more vulnerable consequences of employment problems post-migration.

As the principal researcher is Sinhalese and had membership in the Montreal Sri Lankan associations, this insider position allowed greater access to the target population and aided in establishing rapport with prospective participants. In addition, the researcher's fluency in participants' native tongue (Sinhalese) facilitated communication of narratives. Last, the Sinhalese compose the largest ethnic group in Sri Lanka, composing 80% of the total population. Though Tamils represented a larger proportion of immigrants to Canada in the past because of the civil war, now that peace has been restored to the country, the Sinhalese immigrants represent a greater migration potential due to their larger numbers.

Moderate conversational English fluency was an inclusion criterion. As English was an official language of Sri Lanka and is used widely in Sri Lanka, most Sri Lankan immigrants speak English with varying levels of fluency. Also, interviewing in the English language would facilitate transcription and multiple rater coding of the data. Participants were informed that they were free to respond in either English or Sinhalese during the interviews, as well as to interweave English and Sinhalese in their responses. This was stipulated because sociolinguistics research posits that the language of the interview mediates the type of information revealed (Iyengar, 1991; Merriam, Johnson-Bailey, Lee, Kee, Ntseane, & Muhamed, 2001), and that disclosures may vary with the language that is spoken (Pavlenko, 2002; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004). As the principal researcher is proficient in both languages, this provision enabled participants to fully express themselves and decrease linguistic restrictions.

Although the general norms for narrative studies allow for a sample of as small as one or two participants (Creswell, Hanson, Plano Clark, & Morales, 2007; Maxwell, 1996), data for this study were collected from 10 participants which is a respectable sample size for a narrative study (Patton, 2002). Saturation of data was achieved before the 10th interview, and data collection was terminated after the 10th interview.

Procedures

The study was submitted for review to the Research Ethics Board of McGill University and approved prior to data collection (see Appendix A). Participants were recruited through two local organizations: (a) the Sri Lanka Canada Association of Montreal (SLCAM), and (b) the Sri Lankan Sinhalese Association of Montreal (SLSAM). These associations had expressed interest in assisting with participant recruitment when contacted by the researcher. Given the volume of the target population in Montreal and their regular contact with the previously-named organizations, recruitment was straightforward. Audience interest in participation was fairly high.

A recruitment letter (see Appendix B) was sent out to those interested in participating. Once participants decided to participate, they were invited to an interview where they filled out a consent form (see Appendix C) and a demographic form (see Appendix D) about their family, level of education and prior and current occupations. During the time of the one-on-one interviews, the researcher presented participants with the prompts delineated in the section entitled 'Data Collection Method'.

Interviews were conducted in the researcher's office or at participants' homes. Interviews lasted from one to two hours and were led by the primary researcher. All participants were given full details about the goals and procedures of the study. They were informed that they were free to terminate participation at any time, without any negative consequences. They were asked to provide informed consent, told that all identifying information would be deleted from the transcript, and that pseudonyms would be used when reporting any results. All audio recordings were kept confidential and the transcripts were coded with a specific number to ensure confidentiality. The master list of participants and code numbers was kept under lock and key, accessible only to the primary researcher.

The interviews were transcribed and verified by transcribers and the primary researcher. Following the first interview, a second interview was conducted between one week and one month later with each of the participants. This interview was conducted to verify the researcher's understanding of the narratives, which were summarized (see Appendix E) and read to the participants in the second interview. This was done for several purposes: (a) as a second level of member checking, (b) to help the researcher understand the participants' narratives, and (c) to elicit deeper reflections on the stories narrated in the first interview. A post-interview debriefing was done with all participants. None of the participants reported experiencing painful emotions during the interview or a desire for further exploration through counselling. Nonetheless, referral information for appropriate organizations (e.g., South Asian Women's Community Centre, Sri Lankan associations) was kept on hand as resources in

case there was a need for further assistance. Participants were informed that those who so wish would have access to the results of the study.

Trustworthiness

Maykut and Morehouse (1994) pose key questions that establish goodness of qualitative research: "To what extent can we place confidence in the outcomes of the study? Do we believe what the researcher has reported?" (p. 145). Although there seem to be "no canons, decision rules, algorithms, or even any agreed-upon heuristics in qualitative research" (Miles & Huberman, 1984, p. 230) to assure that research results meet generally accepted principles of trustworthiness, trustworthiness has been ensured by carrying out a number of strategies: (a) clarifying the researcher's positionality, (b) procedural memoing, (c) member-checking, and (d) auditing.

Researcher's positionality. In qualitative research, a brief description of the researcher's social identity helps situate the reader on the author's position and investment (Morrow, 2007). In a narrative study, the researcher's role is to encourage the participant to tell her story. This requires the establishment of trust and confidence in the researcher. It is critical to engage with researcher positionality, which provides a personal description of perceived biases and assumptions which may influence research outcomes. Studying any type of phenomena depends on the researcher as much as the topic researched. While participants, settings, and documents may provide raw data for empirical studies, the overall investigation truly begins with the investigator. By acknowledging and articulating how her roles and relationships influence the study, the researcher

can contribute to the overall trustworthiness of the investigation (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007). Engaging in reflexivity — actively analyzing "past situations, events, products, with the inherent goals of critique and revision for the explicit purpose of achieving an understanding that can lead to change in thought or behavior" (Danielewicz, 2001, p. 155) — can help clarify a number of important issues, such as how biases, prejudices, and previous personal and professional experiences may possibly influence the structure, data collection, analysis, and interpretation of the study (Enos, 2001; Mehra, 2001; Merchant, 2001; Zurita, 2001). Reflexivity also assists in helping to articulate how "the inquirer is part of the setting, context, and social phenomenon he or she seeks to understand" (Schwandt, 2001, p. 224).

The fact that I am Sri Lankan, a member of Sri Lankan cultural associations, Sinhalese-speaking, and female, contributed to the engagement of participants with this study. Shared characteristics such as membership in the same ethnic group, having a shared language, being an immigrant, and participation in cultural events are likely to have increased the trust and openness of the participants. When I met each participant, I introduced myself, informed participants about consent, potential risks and benefits of participation, safeguards regarding confidentiality of the data, and the general goals of the research. For accuracy, the interviews were transcribed, verified by a second set of transcribers and the primary researcher, and a summary of the interview was presented to each participant for a member check.

Another aspect of qualitative narrative research is the co-construction of meaning that occurs during narrative interviews (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2002). There are two angles to the co-construction of meaning: (a) the perception and reactions of the participants, and (b) the perception and reactions of the researcher. Regarding the perception and reactions of the participants, my status as an immigrant woman from Sri Lanka who has become a Canadian citizen and is successfully pursuing graduate education and employment in my field of choice, may be perceived in ways which may beneficial or detrimental to the study. For example, these women may identify with me because of perceived similarities and disclose more openly than to another, and may feel pride and hope due to the successes of a fellow Sri Lankan immigrant woman and feel optimistic and encouraged in their own career pursuits. At the same time, participants' self-comparison to me may contribute to feelings of shame, defensiveness about their perceived weaknesses, or secretiveness about their achievements or lack thereof. Prior to the interview, I discussed the fact that participants may have expectations (e.g., expectation that they need to have established successful careers), but that there are no standards to which they are being held to and that I was not evaluating their career progression or career identity. I encouraged them to tell me about their career identity without fear of evaluation.

In addition, from the perspective of the researcher, I was conscious of the possible effects of my cultural identity, biases and expectations, my personal identity and expectations, and my professional biases and expectations on my interpretations of the narratives. I will briefly outline my personal reflection on

my social identity, biases, cultural stereotypes and research expectations. My identity as an immigrant of Sri Lankan origin could have advantages and disadvantages for the study. From a practical stance, as mentioned earlier, my contacts with Sri Lankan organizations in Montreal helped with recruitment and data gathering. My cultural background facilitated rapport building with the participants and my familiarity with the experiences of Sri Lankans in the Montreal community greatly helped comprehend communication styles and cultural nuances in the interviews. My experiences with immigration familiarity with stories of others' immigration and employment experiences in Quebec helped me query these topics appropriately. However, I also have significant differences with the experiences of these women. I immigrated at the age of 11, studied in the French school system and became bilingual, and pursued graduate studies. These differences contribute to a very different career identity development and job search experience; hence I was careful to avoid neglecting any differences they may bring up and not to divert their narratives to fit my own experience.

In addition, I had to take precautions that my familiarity with this cultural group does not bias my expectations. My cultural identities include being a former Sri Lankan immigrant woman of middle class socioeconomic status, coming from a heterosexual nuclear family, and who became a naturalized Canadian citizen of middle class socioeconomic status. As such I was more likely to perceive these immigrant women as belonging to the same demographic categories as myself than to perceive the differences that exist between us. My

personal identity includes being the eldest daughter whose family provided for my education and training, and a young liberal-minded woman who believes that women need to be able to define their lives and be financially independent. I was aware that I might expect that these women would also share similar values. Further, my personal experience of immigration and career identity evolution in my parents, relatives and friends was likely to bias me to expect that these women experienced similar barriers to the establishment of careers in their fields and to expect that they made some of the same shifts in career identity. My professional identity includes theoretical and clinical knowledge about career development, life stage development, immigration and resettlement. This knowledge and frameworks to consider stage-like development, with transition-related crises, and gradual embracing of new potentials and shifts in their career identity.

Here I will summarize my expectations regarding the study. I expect that Sri Lankan immigrant women will arrive with a range of career identities which may have been associated with the level of financial need in their family of origin or family of choice. I expect that the careers chosen by these women will be fairly influenced by financial need or other factors in their family of origin. Further, I surmise that for those women who were less satisfied with their career identity, the change of field and change in career identity may actually be viewed as a positive transition, to the extent that it does not conflict with financial needs during resettlement. For those women who were satisfied with their career trajectory and career identity prior to immigration, any necessary identity changes

and job losses may be associated with greater distress and more conflict about their career identity.

To conclude, the interviews now have a backdrop consisting of the biases and expectations that both the participants and I, the researcher, may have brought. While I attempted to reduce my biases and expectations, to a certain extent, they were woven into the narrative as we co-created participants' narratives about career identity.

Procedural memoing. During this research study, I documented all the steps I engaged in throughout the data collection and analysis processes. This procedure, known as memoing, identifies the steps taken by the investigator throughout the research process. In addition, I took notes on my personal experiences during data collection and analysis and how these relate to my cultural knowledge of values and mores, background in the research literature, and personal impressions of the participants. These notes provided experiential data which were applied to improve the analysis of data (Strauss, 1987). These steps were sources of information used to track the subjectivity inherent in my research.

Member-checking. Once data analysis has begun, findings can also be made more trustworthy through verification procedures. One such procedure is member-checking, whereby the participants provide feedback on data analysis. In this study, the member-check was applied at two stages in the research process. First, an in-vivo member-check was conducted through the researcher's clarification of unclear meanings during the first interview (Creswell & Miller,

2000; Hoyt, Warbasse, & Chu, 2006). Second, another member-check was conducted at the second interview where corrections and approval of the interview summaries were gathered in order to maintain the trustworthiness of the data and overall study.

Auditing. Data auditing is a common practice in qualitative research (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) since it adds an additional layer of verification where "inquirers [have] the opportunity to test their growing insights and to expose themselves to searching questions" (Guba, 1981, p. 85). In the current study, multiple readers, including the primary researcher, reviewed the results of analysis to concur or debate the results. This process contributed to reducing bias in analysis. In this study, Dr. Martha Chamodraka served as peer debriefer at the data categorization stage. She is a counsellor at McGill University's Counselling Services. Her research interests are psychotherapy process research and qualitative research. She obtained her Ph.D. at McGill University's Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology. In addition, the thesis supervisors, Drs. Jeeseon Park and Jack De Stefano, served as auditors. Dr. Park was recently an assistant professor at McGill University's Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology and her research interests include qualitative research, immigration issues, and multicultural training. Dr. Jack De Stefano is also on the faculty of McGill University's Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology and his research interests include narrative therapy, qualitative research, and the supervision of counselling

psychologists. They reviewed the data analysis at individual and cross-analysis case stages in order to increase the trustworthiness of the results.

Data Analysis

Structural dimensions of narratives. As mentioned earlier, the four-dimensional structure of narratives consists of: (a) forms of interaction, (b) temporal sequence, (c) location and era, (Dewey, 1929), and (d) internal personality factors and external environmental factors (Clandinin & Connelly, 1988). Analysis proceeded through multiple readings of the texts (i.e., interview transcripts), where each reading was dedicated to one aspect or dimension of interest. The dimensions of the narrative that emerged as important to understanding the participants' career identity were: forms of interactions, temporal sequence, location, and internal and external factors. Because qualitative data analysis allows for the data to inform the structures being analyzed, each of these dimensions was given special attention in the analysis.

Contextualization of data analysis. Before examining the transcripts, proper narrative analysis requires placing the interviews in the social context of their recounting (Morrow, 2007). Participants recounted their stories to a young Sri Lankan woman who was an immigrant and may be perceived as having a successful career path and a professional career identity. This may have influenced the rapport by making participants feel less successful about their own career or induce participants to overemphasize their successes or deemphasize their failures. Alternatively, the researcher's identity may have influenced participants' motivation and hopefulness about their efforts and goals in a

productive direction due to positive role modelling. These potential influences of the researcher's identity reflect the ongoing social dialogical nature of narratives and how they are means of representing oneself in the world. Interviews are "by their very nature, social encounters where speakers collaborate in producing retrospective (and prospective) accounts or versions of their past (or future) actions, experiences, feelings and thoughts" (Rapley, 2004, p. 16).

Furthermore, even though content of the narratives may cover a wide span of time in participants' life, the narratives themselves are told at a fixed point in time. Therefore, the potential influence of societal and historical events at the time of storytelling on participants' identities cannot be overlooked. Currently, the debate in Quebec about "reasonable accommodations" for immigrants (i.e., the questioning of socio-political adjustments made by native and naturalized Quebecers for immigrants) and the events of September 11, 2001 which tightened Canadian immigration procedures and increased xenophobia in North America, are part of the societal context of these narratives (Bouchard & Taylor, 2008). It was necessary to be aware of and to understand these factors in order to contextualize participant narratives.

Method of narrative data analysis. Here I will present an overview of how the data were prepared for analysis. Where certain participants spoke in Sinhalese during the interview, these sections were translated by the president of the Sai Baba Center, Mrs. Mercy Karunananthan, a Sri Lankan who is fluent in Sinhalese and English, prior to being analyzed. After the first interview, the narratives were read in their entirety multiple times to create the summaries for

the second interview. The researcher summarized the narrative of each participant (see Appendix E) which was read to the participant during the second interview in order to increase the researcher's understanding of the participant's career evolution. The second interview was read multiple times to obtain a clear understanding of the participant's story and any additional information that was gathered.

In order to identify the important elements within each of the dimensions of narratives outlined by Dewey (1929) and Clandinin & Connelly (1988), multiple readings of the texts were done for information that was pertinent to career identity and career identity development. Given the quantity of narrative data, the data was coded to facilitate keeping track of domains, categories, and themes. The coding was entered into NVivo qualitative data analysis software. During the initial phase, segments of text that described a single idea were identified and summarized close to the participants' words and explicit meaning. Every effort was made to use participants' own words and stay as close to the data as possible. Each summary phrase, also known as a core idea, was entered as a data unit into NVivo.

The research question topics reflected the domains of inquiry and were the basis for the highest level of categorization. The three domains consisted of: (a) career identity development in Sri Lanka, (b) career identity development in Canada, and (c) career identity evolution over time. As the texts were being read and coded, the core ideas were placed within the relevant domain. As the core ideas accumulated within the domains, the presence of specific topics emerged.

These topics became categories or subcategories and reflected specific concepts (e.g., difficulty establishing a career or linguistic barriers). As the narratives were deconstructed into core ideas and these core ideas were placed into emerging categories, the body of data became more refined and micro-level topic delineations which were identified as themes emerged (e.g., worthlessness and anger) (See Table 1).

Table 1

Levels of Analysis for Results

Level of Analysis	Definition
I. Domain	Highest level categories based on research questions (e.g., Career identity in Canada)
II. Category & Subcategory	Topics that reflect specific concepts within a domain (e.g., Difficulty establishing career)
III. Theme	Micro-level topics that emerged within categories (e.g., Worthlessness)

Once the analysis of the individual narratives was completed and all the core ideas had been associated with relevant categories and themes, the core ideas were reviewed again for fit within the categories and themes. Categories with overlapping subcategories were merged and core ideas that fit better in a different category were appropriately re-categorized. The summaries of the data and the individual-level analysis were reviewed using a consensus-seeking procedure with

Dr. Chamodraka. After the individual-level analysis reviews were completed, the necessary adjustments were made to the body of findings.

Next, a higher order of abstraction was used to examine the data that emerged from the stories across all participants. The core ideas underwent a second round of constant comparison to verify their fit within categories existing across participants or to place them in a subcategory where they fit better according to their inherent higher-order meaning. Simultaneously, the subcategories which were too individual-specific were placed under relevant higher level categories that were common across participants. This reduced the number of subcategories as redundancy was eliminated. Finally, through examination of the four dimensions of narratives, the three domains of inquiry of this study are explained using data that formed 13 major categories, 22 minor categories and 79 illustrative themes. This process was audited by Drs. Park and De Stefano.

The final stage of narrative data analysis and generating of overarching descriptions of career identity development is referred to as restorying (Cortazzi, 1993; Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2000). Restorying is applied to narratives to define the greater narrative picture from individual stories. This greater narrative takes into account aspects such as the individual narrator and the broader social and cultural context as advocated by Murray (2003). Therefore, following the narrative analysis, the data were compiled into a detailed chronological account that contained distinct historical times and geographic locations as a context, a series of plot events that occurred in different social contexts and had

psychological and sociological repercussions for the main characters and their family members, and involved a series of inner narratives or epiphanies which led to a denouement of career identity changes with implications for the individuals' future. The findings consist of a recounting of these factors in the career identity development of Sri Lankan Sinhalese immigrant women within a grand chronologically, geographically, and sociologically-bounded storyline.

In summary, this study was conducted from a constructivist perspective using narrative methodology. Participants were recruited through Sri Lankan associations in Montreal, and their interview data was analyzed according to the guidelines put forth by Dewey (1929) and Clandinin and Connelly (1988, 2000). The trustworthiness of the results was ensured through multiple approaches, namely engaging in reflexivity to identify researcher's positionality, procedural memoing, member-checking, and auditing as prescribed by Creswell and Miller (2000). Finally, the findings were reported using a grand storyline (Murray, 2003) that outlines all of the important factors that shaped the career identity development of these Sri Lankan Sinhalese immigrant women in Quebec.

Participant demographic data are provided about the sample of participants (see Table 2). Participants' names were changed and pseudonyms used throughout. Another table summarizing their employment is provided (see Table 3).

Table 2

Participant Demographic Data

Pseudonym	Age	Marital status/ Number of children	Year of Migration/ Class/Status	Perceived Career Stage
Janani	25 yrs	Married No children	2007 Sponsored Permanent Resident	Pre-career development
Surya	40 yrs	Married Two children	1993 Refugee Citizen	Mid-career
Lakshmi	42 yrs	Married One child	2006 Sponsored Permanent Resident	Early career, planning for future
Devi	42 yrs	Married Two children	2005 Refugee Permanent Resident	Early career, planning for future
Geetha	45 yrs	Married Two children	1993 Refugee Citizen	Mid-career
Shanthi	47 yrs	Married One child	1990 Refugee Citizen	Mid-career
Malini	50 yrs	Divorced Two children	2003 Sponsored Citizen	Uncertain Late career
Damayanthi	56 yrs	Divorced Two children	1977 Sponsored Citizen	Late career
Pooja	59 yrs	Married Two children	1993 Sponsored Citizen	Pre-retirement
Suneetha	66 yrs	Widowed Two children	1990 Refugee Citizen	Pre-retirement

Table 3

Participant Employment History

Pseudonym	Age	Education/ employment In Sri Lanka	Pre-migration occupation & years	Current occupation & years
Janani	25	13 yrs school 1 yr Preschool Diploma 3 yrs work	Preschool teacher 3	Student – French classes 1
Surya	40	13 yrs school 1 yr Architecture Program 1 yr work	Architect 1	Hairdresser 1
Lakshmi	42	11yrs school 1 yr Technical Training 12 yrs work	Receptionist/Administrative Assistant at International school 4	General Help in biscuit factory 2
Devi	42	13 yrs school 1 yr Secretarial Diploma 6 yrs work	Secretarial Accounts Clerk 5	Salesperson assistant 1
Geetha	45	13 yrs school 2 yr Commerce Program 8 yrs work	Senior Administrative Assistant 5	Warehouse Inspector 5
Shanthi	46	13 yrs school 1 yr Technical Training 7 yrs work	Data Entry Operator 6.5	Data Entry Operator 1.5
Malini	50	11 yrs school 2 yrs Technical Training 7 yrs work	Stenographer 5.5	Unemployed, formerly Early Childhood Educator Assistant 1
Damayanthi	56	16 yrs school 3 yrs University Degree 11 yrs work	CEGEP equivalent teacher 12	Early Childhood Educator 14
Pooja	59	13 yrs school 2 yr Diploma in Teaching 20 yrs work	Teacher post-secondary 20	Mechanical Assembly Operator 7
Suneetha	66	17 yrs school 4 yrs University Degree 17 yrs work	Assistant Director of administration 5	Early Childhood Educator 6

11 yrs: Kindergarten to Ordinary Level, equivalent to high school in Canada
13 yrs: Kindergarten to Advanced Level, equivalent to CEGEP in Canada
15 / 16 yrs: University Degree, equal to Bachelor's Degree in Canada
17 / 18 yrs: Master's Degree, equal to Master's Degree in Canada
20 / 21 yrs: Ph. D, equal to Ph. D in Canada

Chapter IV: Findings

The purpose of this study was to identify and understand important aspects of the career identity development of Sri Lankan immigrant women following their employment-related experiences in Sri Lanka and Quebec. The important elements of the narratives are reported chronologically and categorically with each domain's major and minor categories illustrated by a combination of their themes. Three distinct domains were examined: the first two domains reflect chronological phases of career development, and the third domain reflects participants' inner narratives and understandings of their career identity evolution.

Cherished Career Development in Sri Lanka

The first domain is concerned with the participants' career identity development in Sri Lanka. The data analysis generated two categories: one specific to the individual – career interests and actions which were self-directed and developed through interactions between the self and the environment. The second depicts the influence of socio-economic systems and social forces on career development and maintenance. These two categories and their themes are elaborated in the following sections.

Self-directed efforts targeted at chosen career. This first category illustrates the multiple psychological processes that occurred during early career development. One of the important threads of the narratives in this category was the clear fit between the personal and career choices. This led the participants to seek career-targeted educational choices and fuelled the development of agency in career-building.

Congruence between personal and career. One of the important parts of the narratives was the centrality of career in the participants' lives. Career was identified as a central source of personal fulfillment. Work was valued as a basis for economic stability, but further, work was viewed as providing financial independence, social status, and personal satisfaction. This is reflected in Devi's brief statement: "Because we had to work most of the time, we had to be happy with our work".

Another important element of these narratives was the development of a career image early in life. This early career image became strongly internalized due to factors that will be presented in the following sections. For example, Shanthi explains how her career image was developed from early work experiences:

> The career has to be the main thing, what you build up when you are young. I think you take that to your future. I think the environment that you got when you were young, is the one that will be forever in your life. I think like that. So I started working as a typist. So that is the one that it's in my blood, or whatever like, my body. The image it goes a long way.

Single-minded pursuit of career through education. The centrality of career motivated participants to pursue education and remain focused on one profession. Having the option to choose their profession provided added incentive to pursue the relevant education. They also described investing time and energy into their education which is consistent with the limited opportunities

to obtain post-secondary education in Sri Lanka. As can be seen in Appendix E, after completing the equivalent of CEGEP-level studies, the majority of participants completed professional diplomas or university degrees and two pursued professional training in secretarial schools. One participant completed an undergraduate degree in Sri Lanka and another participant won a government scholarship to pursue a university studies in India despite the extremely high level of competition for university entrance.

Educational activity was clearly oriented towards employment, and following completion, they began working in their field. Further, their target profession remained virtually unchanged throughout their career in Sri Lanka. Naturally, the length of employment and number of jobs varied depending on their age, their length of stay in Sri Lanka prior to migrating, and the timing of the birth of children. The range of years of employment in Sri Lanka varied between one and 17 years.

Agency in career building and professional advancement. Participants described being very proactive about career advancement. Agency was attributed to a desire to a desire to reach a career goal, improvement in their education and rank, or wanting to build a good professional foundation. Suneetha described her sequential path of career progress towards upper-level administration:

> I was there for seventeen years. After three years of recruitment I went in for the chartered accountancy course, three years. So there I call it six years, then, after that also I worked as an accountant for about four years, then it became ten years. I was elected for this

> computer course so that was about one year's training. After that I was functioning as a systems analyst, and all the time we look for career progress.

Positive benefits of employment reinforcing career development. Participants spoke passionately of the benefits they obtained from employment and how these benefits played out in personal and social realms. In the personal realm, they felt confident and skilled, they felt good about their work and their fit within their work, they felt interested in their work, and derived happiness and pride from work. In addition, they gained personal satisfaction from doing good work and a sense of financial independence and personal freedom. Malini who worked as a stenographer mentioned:

> I felt really good because when I was working on my own, like earning on my own, the working environment was good. So overall I was very happy working in that company. It's a semi-government company. You know status-wise it was really good. People treated me like [I was] somebody.

Social recognition was another important motivator of participants' career development. Participants mentioned the positive emotions of pride, self-confidence, self-esteem, and a feeling of belongingness through their work as important by-products of social recognition. Damayanthi, a former CEGEP-level teacher, captures both of these aspects in her statement:

> I am proud to be a teacher, and people respected my position. As a teacher, it's [a] recognized job. We have benefits and, everything!

> Prestigious type of job, for a woman. Ah the best job there. I mean, what I think. You have a good self-esteem, with the job.

Having a career was likened to having something that was uniquely for themselves and which provided opportunities for growth outside the home.

Sociocultural factors support career development. The second category encompasses sociocultural factors that contributed to their career identity development. These factors included: (a) family and social network support, (b) societal expectation of employment, and (c) societal recognition of work.

Encouragement from family and support network. Among socio-cultural factors that support participants' career development, encouragement from family and support network (i.e., friends and community members) emerged as an important thread in their narratives. These women spoke not only of the family expectation that they would study and be employed but also of the verbal and emotional support from family members which boosted their career aspirations. While the extended support network was also seen as supportive, they often played a more instrumental role by providing contacts and introductions that helped participants secure their first jobs.

Family support also came in an indirect form - being freed from burdensome domestic responsibilities of young women – which allowed them to focus on their studies and career development. Shanthi highlights this by recalling how it was when she was single: "Nothing in my mind to look after the family or anything, I was just a single person so everything was done at home and then I just have to work only."

Societal expectation of employment in Sri Lanka. The larger socio-cultural context had important influences on participants' occupational choices. In Sri Lanka, women are expected to study and have their own job. These societal norms regarding women's participation in the workforce were aptly captured in the following quote by Suneetha:

> At my time, women were expected to study and have a career of their own. And we were equal partners in the family life and bear the burden, and burden means responsibilities. We have an important place in society, women have an important place in society, and Sri Lanka is really well known, the first female Prime Minister came from Sri Lanka, Mrs. Bandaranaike. So culturally we have an important place, a woman has an important place. Equal partners, and very often the dynamic partner. Because they manage the family, they bring up the children. And they support their husbands. A lot of responsibility lies on the woman. The wife also works. So actually the woman's role is far more important than his.

Because of these societal norms, participants felt a shared responsibility with their husbands for their family income and management. Participants continued to work after marriage, except those who had children and stopped working while their children were very young. So central was the value of employment that these women want to transmit this to the next generation by being role models for their children. As Surya stated:

> I think it's a good idea to them [children] to also see that it's not only the father can do more. The mother is doing a big job there too. Yeah, it's very important, no? If not that they will also think, okay, no need for women to go to work.

Societal recognition of work in Sri Lanka. Participants identified positive feedback at work as an important enhancer of career satisfaction and reinforcer of career identity. Social recognition of their work abilities by employers and coworkers was perceived as confirmation that they had chosen an appropriate profession. Social recognition was particularly evident among those in government-based occupations because these jobs offered greater prestige, occupational benefits, and job security. These women gained recognition and respect from others due to their government jobs, which in turn spurred them to continue their efforts.

To summarize this domain, participants chose and followed education, professions, and employment trajectory that were consistent with their personal traits, career values, and personal identity. Family support and social network were instrumental in guiding and encouraging their career development. Further, sociocultural norms encouraged women's employment and finally, participants felt social recognition and pride due to their employment, which spurred them to further their endeavours. Their career development process was experienced as a source of personal satisfaction and self-esteem.

The Turbulent and Unanticipated Career Development Post-Migration

The pattern of planned career development, steady progress and positive affective and instrumental outcomes they experienced in Sri Lanka unexpectedly changed when they migrated to Quebec due the civil war or family reunification. This second domain is composed of three categories. The first focuses on linguistic, educational, and professional barriers, the second describes family and socioeconomic forces of migration, economic realities and discrimination, and the third category focuses on additional catalysts of the process of career identity change. These categories and their themes will be described in the following section.

Academic, professional and linguistic barriers in Quebec. Canadian employment-related systems were the most commonly reported barriers to participants' career development. These consisted specifically of linguistic barriers to employment, devaluation of educational credentials, non-recognition of work experience, and the need for retraining. Consequent to facing these barriers, participants underwent a deep reflective process and a review of their qualifications, the requirements of work, and the implications thereof for retraining. Further, they experienced a range of emotions related to their reflection and work-related experiences. These emotions contrasted with the positive emotions that were associated with their career development in Sri Lanka.

French language barrier. The requirement of French language fluency for employment in Quebec was the most frequently cited barrier to employment.

This was unanimously reported as hindering participants from attaining their career goals and aspirations. Participants who had entered the labour force recalled the French classes as a hurdle in their career development. One of the problems was the difficulty of learning a new language in later life because as mothers and adult learners, they faced the challenges of juggling studies with employment and family life, and learning French through an immersion format.

Lack of French fluency was a particular challenge for participants whose occupation depended on language, such as teachers and administrative assistants. So demanding was the linguistic reality of Quebec that it forced many participants to explore other options - job searches in the smaller English job market, delaying employment while studying to gain sufficient French fluency, or giving up the hope of pursuing a career in their field. The difficulty learning a new language stirred fears about the uncertainty of the future, increased the stresses of simultaneously running a household, and raised concerns about the eventual likelihood of employment.

Lack of French fluency affected their employability such that they could only obtain short-term or seasonal employment in factories or service industries. Such employment was typically associated with variable work schedules and routines, thereby making the inclusion of French classes particularly challenging, and creating a vicious cycle of lack of language fluency and limited job opportunities. Secondly, participants reported that learning French in the immersion format, where all explanations and teaching are provided in French, was not suitable for these adults learning a second language. While the

immersion format is ideal for language acquisition in children, this format proved to be a challenge for adult learners, who felt their learning would have improved by classes structured in English.

The biggest impact of the lack of French fluency combined with the necessity of financial survival was that all participants were unable to apply for work commensurate with their former qualifications and experience. Suneetha explained how French affected her career progress:

> It was not easy and my situation was really complicated because I had certain – I had these skills – accounting and computers and all, but I couldn't make use of them. I was getting blocked because of French. Those opportunities are getting blocked. They have an English companies and places, but even in those they ask for French, at least some knowledge of French. It was like a legal requirement here. If you're working, even in an English company you had to have some French knowledge. If French customers come you should be able to entertain, deal with them. Then, so like this time, gradually I'm getting limited to the English sector.

Lack of recognition of Sri Lankan education and work experience necessitating retraining. The non-recognition of educational qualifications and Sri Lankan work experience by institutions and employers in Quebec was a second important theme. Surya shared the circuitous route required for the re-establishment of her career trajectory:

> The education department here […] were telling my equivalence that they couldn't give me the college level because I don't have the language. [..] And especially in here they call it the Auto-Cad. So you need the computer experience, and it's ten years more. It's like here, compared to our country, now you need ten years of experience. So then they were troubles, so I wanted to go back to college. And when I forward my papers to the college entrance, they were saying that without French that you cannot get into the college. So I need the French.

These formerly employed women experienced the equivalent of being fired and reported decreased self-worth, professional confusion, and dissatisfaction. In response to being deskilled (Man, 2004), these women felt the necessity of retraining. Those who were early career professionals and who were younger found the length of retraining particularly daunting. They felt pressure to complete retraining rapidly and reported feeling a burden on their families while they do so. Those who were mid or later career professionals, and who were older, felt frustration and a lowering of self-esteem from the downgrading of their occupation and the lack of occupational choice. They longed for the chance to prove themselves on the workforce to feel worthwhile. These women also felt the well-being of members of their family was affected by their unemployment and underemployment. The women who couldn't hope to reclaim their former status and circumstances of life due to the constraints described feeling invisible and

unimportant. Suneetha, whose university degree wasn't recognized and retrained as an early childhood educator, stated:

> It was a complete change. I couldn't go, I couldn't get into the place where I was. That grade, that level of functioning. Now I have to get adjusted to where I am. It was hard. And frustrating and I felt small, and within me. I felt small, and that important person, you know, I remember briskly walking into my office and everybody greeting, exchanging greetings. Now people don't see me. It was difficult.

Feeling overwhelmed by the obstacles, some participants sought ways of succeeding in the Quebec job market, and the most commonly used strategies were seeking work in an occupation that did not require extensive retraining, selecting occupations which required minimal communication, or embarking on self-employment.

One of the most troubling consequences of being unemployed or underemployed was the loss of career identity. This occurred gradually, as participants realized the extent of challenges to their professional lives. During the time that they are away from their career, either following language classes or obtaining Quebec qualifications, or waiting to get hired at interviews, a certain loss of familiarity and self-confidence in their career-related skills occurred. Their narratives emphasize the impact of unemployment on becoming deskilled over time, as well as the loss of confidence to return to the professional sphere.

Sociocultural, economic and migration barriers to employment. This category entails barriers that exist in the social systems, specifically the immigration, economic and social systems in Quebec and immigrants' family systems. These systems presented challenges as these women entered and navigated the labour market. Family pressures forced participants to make difficult decisions about professional development. Also, immigration and adjustment to life in Quebec played a major role in their occupational choices and employment processes. Working as new immigrants was rife with job insecurities and financial instabilities. Lastly, multiple forms of discrimination marred their job-seeking and employment experiences.

Restraining impact of family responsibilities on career development. Finding satisfactory work is a challenge for all immigrants, but is very important and simultaneously more challenging for these immigrant mothers. These women were motivated to seek employment for the well-being of their families and children, both economically and psychologically. Yet they felt unable to provide well for their children and consequently reported feeling disappointed. Malini explains how this affects her daughters:

> I hope that I'll be able to get a job, so…so my children can see that I'm also doing something. Because, you know their friends, their parents, they go to work, and they have a better life, in terms of, um...you can say luxury? If I go to work and I obtain a car…then my children will have like a better life, I can...take them places…do things with them. […] Because, there's not enough

> money to do other things, rather than you know, buying groceries, and paying rent, and bills, nothing left to do anything else. So, makes me really, really, really…sometimes you know, disappointed.

Mothers who were offered jobs that had time conflicts with their family and childcare responsibilities, for example shift work in factories and department stores, were forced to turn down those positions and became stay-at-home mothers who were dependent on spouses or social assistance. The challenges of obtaining employment congruent with their career identity while meeting the demands of childcare and family responsibilities were so great that several decided to postpone career pursuits to a later date, when they believed they could invest more time and energy into the re-qualification process. While they were stay-at-home mothers, some adjusted their career goals, some retrained, and some became deskilled as their experience and training became outdated. All mothers had entered the workforce when their children were of school age, but few were satisfied with their occupation and career. Simultaneously, some mothers were under tremendous pressure to continue working instead of retraining for their career progress because of their responsibility for family income. They too experienced job dissatisfaction but were not free to halt employment for professional re-orientation.

Impact of immigration and acculturation on career development. A significant part of the initial upheaval and stress participants who were refugee claimants experienced post-migration related to mounting a successful

immigration case and not knowing if they would succeed. Legalization procedures significantly impacted participants' sense of security and stability in Canada, and consequently their career trajectory and training options. The time to obtain landed immigrant status, permanent resident status or citizenship was of varying duration. The ideal immigration procedure situation for career development was experienced by Shanthi who arrived with her family as refugees, obtained landed immigrant status seven months after arrival, and permanent resident status two years after arrival. Her relatives in Montreal provided a strong support network and she was able to put considerable time and effort into work and re-qualification, including moving to Ottawa and Toronto for job opportunities. In contrast, the most difficult immigration scenario for career development was a lengthy legalization procedure with a limited support network in Quebec which was exemplified by Devi who was still awaiting landed immigrant status four years post-migration. Unfortunately, she was penalized for this status in her employment efforts. Devi stated:

> Sometimes when I go for the interview, some employers [are] not satisfied for my work permit because of the one year work permit. I am a good worker but they are not… happy because my work permit is not continuous, only for one year. Then we have to renew every year. Because of this they are not happy….The employer wants continuing the work. If I get the land paper, we can take anything, any position.

Contrary to what may be expected, being pre-selected as a permanent resident before migrating without the legal battles, or being sponsored by relatives and having a support network in place did not noticeably improve career outcomes. This is because these women were expected to work immediately in order to avoid becoming a financial burden to their sponsors or the government. Thus they did not have any dedicated time for retraining, language education or seeking specific work. In contrast, refugees underwent lengthy legalization procedures but were provided resources to improve integration and financial support. Thus, immigration processes and time for acculturation played a role in career development.

Participants described the process of adjustment and acculturation to Quebec as one of hardship and acclimatization to a very different lifestyle, which generated significant stress. They narrated a notable learning and acculturation process which occurred over several years. Damayanthi explains:

> Suddenly you change to [a new country], you can't suddenly change, you need time to get adapted, to get adjusted and all these things. And to go slowly and get into the system. It takes time. Because at the beginning you don't understand that, even when people tell you… You cannot come to understand certain things unless you [have]…gone through and with time you understand

The process of acculturating took time which influenced their employment as some participants described being uncertain of their performance on the job and of having to adjust to Canadian values in their work environments.

Job insecurity, layoffs, and financial considerations. The derailment from their career path and difficulties securing stable work in Quebec had implications for financial security and life trajectory. These working women experienced less job security, fewer work benefits and less job stability in their jobs in Quebec compared to their jobs in Sri Lanka. Several had experienced layoffs, some multiple times, which heightened concerns about financial security and pushed them to accept any available work without choice about career progress. Partially due to the instability of jobs in the enclave work market in which some women were employed, some held two jobs simultaneously. Older participants sometimes had to delay retirement in order to accumulate sufficient pensionable years. Because the standard age of retirement in Sri Lanka is 55 years in contrast to 65 in Canada, the obligation to work longer before retirement was acutely felt. This was particularly troubling for some who felt they could not keep up with job demands in their later years.

Participants questioned the value of investing earning years into retraining. The uncertainty of eventual financial compensation made it difficult to justify the cost of updating their language and educational qualifications. Some voiced their doubts about finding jobs after completing language training and re-qualification when they compete with better candidates. They felt they had not progressed professionally at all and shared a feeling of "starting from scratch", even though they had previously developed professional careers and career identities. Malini said:

> I'm already fifty years old, so, so it worries me, at my age, like it took me so long, so it worries me with the…like you know, will I be able to find a job? And you know, because they might want to hire somebody who's younger and more qualified, so it worries me…even if find a job, will I be able to keep it for that long? So…I…sometimes, I'm scared to think, what's the future is going to be?

Participants shared concerns about job shortages and job instability. They focused on meeting immediate financial needs and reported not having the freedom to seek greater fulfillment through their jobs. Nonetheless, in order to improve their futures and quality of life, a few women completed professional programs in English CEGEPs and sought work in the Anglophone job market. Participants who obtained a secure job felt that lower salary and career status were acceptable trade-offs for job security and financial security.

Some participants sought to improve their career situations via self-employment in order to avoid obstacles they experienced on the job market. For them, small businesses such as home daycares, catering and hairdressing salons were the businesses of choice. Participants felt that if one invested the time and effort it was more feasible to start a business in Quebec than in Sri Lanka.

Impact of multiple discriminations on employment options.

Discrimination, in one or more of the forms of racism, ageism, tokenism, and discrimination on the basis of language were encountered by all participants. For the women who were in their 40's or older, ageism was both an internalized fear

and a real experience. Ageism was a hurtful experience that challenged their self-perception as valuable members of society, as illustrated in the following quote by Suneetha:

> I'm a mature person with a lot of knowledge, skills, power and motivation but here now I'm being treated as a beginner. People looked at me as somebody new, somebody [who] does not know what's going on around. And at college I felt age-wise that I was getting discriminated. I was in my forties and most [of] the, my peers, were in their twenties and thirties. When the professor says to break into groups, I find that the woman next to me looks over me to people who are far away to join, not join with me. Yeah so those things are rather hurtful.

Also, racism was commonly reported, and was felt from job interviews and throughout their years of employment. Participants felt their visible minority status gave employers a poor impression and speculated that this caused the lack of job offers. This is captured in Malini's quote.

> I think maybe they don't know me, they don't know my skills. So I think if somebody gave me a chance, I could have proved… I think I didn't get that chance. Because Sri Lanka is a third world country, maybe they, the people here, people in the Western countries, they don't know whether we are able to work. Maybe that's a factor [in not getting hired].

One participant shared an experience of tokenism, where she felt she was being interviewed simply for the sake of conducting an interview with an ethnic minority woman. As a result she was greatly disappointed about not being seriously considered for the position.

None of the women save one was prepared for any form of discrimination. Their encounters with racism were distressing and shook their sense of justice. Racism created a sense of marginalization where these women felt they were part of the underprivileged group and felt this limited their access to employment opportunities.

Instigators of career goal and career identity change. The previous sections covered the educational systems, sociocultural systems and immigration systems that influenced these women's career development. In this section, I discuss the social instigators of career and career identity change and their impact on personality factors.

Support network modifying career goals. For recent migrants, the most common method of finding work is through the Sri Lankan community. Obtaining job opportunities through the social network of well-established Sri Lankans was especially helpful for those who could not secure work through standard procedures. These women sought considerable advice about navigating the labour market from Sri Lankans and other immigrants who became part of their support network. Through their network, women gathered information about the job market and the process of re-establishing their careers. Participants heard the cases of other Sri Lankan immigrants who were still unable to secure good

jobs despite many years of work experience in Sri Lanka and many years of residency in Quebec. Learning about these cases made these women question the viability of their original career paths, decreased their initial job expectations, and helped plan for more gradual professional growth while accepting interim lower status work. Surya states:

> I got [to] manage everything. So I knew that that's what everybody's gonna have [to] after migrating to here. So most of the people are discuss[ing] that they were not satisfied either, so they were telling me okay, you don't try to [get] the real one [career] in here. Get whatever you can for now. Then achieve little by little.

Interplay between social status and career satisfaction. Social status and career satisfaction were connected and important to these women. Most described recognition of their work as a source of career satisfaction, and yet most did not receive much recognition of their work. It was important for these immigrants to achieve some level in their professional work, and some felt they had reached a satisfactory level and had social status and recognition for their work. A few women made self-comparisons with the careers of peers in Sri Lanka or in Montreal. Those who had not reached a satisfactory professional status reported shame and a desire to conceal their occupational activities from the Sri Lankan community. Surya describes stating business work compared to factory work:

> I know I can present myself to anyone, no? So instead of going down in the career-wise, this one was like, it was a boost. Like

> you are satisfied! Okay, like most of the time when we come here and you are going for the odd jobs or anything you know? So you feel so bad about it. Like shame. And not satisfied, you know. You are not happy when you are doing, the career-wise if you are doing a low job, so you're not happy you know, automatically. But when we were doing our own [business], we were very happy.

Employment and social feedback impacting employment perspective. Participants received both supportive and non-supportive feedback at work. Most women employed in occupations that matched their skills and status, recounted feedback that was positive and supportive of employment. In contrast, those employed in unsatisfactory jobs disclosed more negative feedback. Overall, participants described that harmonious relationships with coworkers increased satisfaction and motivation. Some received promotions and saw these as very validating experiences. Shanthi shared that,

> They really like me. My work, they say it's excellent. I feel great. They're very satisfied with my work. And anytime I can get a referral saying that I'm a good worker. So that is a good thing, because when [the] employer recognizes you as a good worker, that makes me feel happy.

Unpleasant feedback was only reported in the context of cultural differences, when some of these women did not know how they or their work was perceived by employers or colleagues.

To summarize the turbulent career development in Quebec, these women faced considerable challenges to their career and employment processes. The most direct barriers consisted of lack of French fluency for desired occupations, educational and work experience devaluation, and extensive re-certification procedures. Within the larger sociocultural context of resettlement, career progress was hampered by family responsibilities, immigration and acculturation burdens, job insecurities that impeded retraining efforts, and multiple forms of discrimination which blocked job opportunities. Finally, the feedback at work and the social support network provided information which initiated modifications to their unreachable career goals. Nonetheless, for these women, attaining a certain level of occupational status was necessary to deriving career satisfaction.

Career Identity, Career Evolution Processes and Outcomes

Participants' initial career identity and career development was transformed through their interactions with society and the Quebec labour market. The third domain relates to the career identity evolution process and outcomes. It starts with reiteration of the centrality of career identity in participants' identity. This is followed by the illustration of the process of re-imaging of career identity after immigrating to Quebec. The next important story line was the career and psychological outcomes of career evolution. The narrative ends with participants' retrospective on their career identity evolution. The categories and the themes therein will be presented in the following sections.

Reinforcement of centrality of career identity. Career and employment had been an important aspect of these women's personal and social identity. The importance of employment came into sharp focus when it was threatened. Also, the link between their personality traits and their occupational goals became clearer for these women at this time.

Importance of employment to overall identity. Employment and having career aspirations was seen as important to well-being and self-esteem. Surya shared, "It's not the money that matters, it's the identity. And the recognition you get from people. Here [in Quebec] you're going to be like nobody! No one knows you. No one cares [about] you." Further, they valued having a respectable job, and doing a job they enjoy and are skilled at. Participants had perceived themselves as being a valuable source of income for their family and held and extremely strong sense of responsibility for the financial well-being of their families, including their extended family. Shanthi's quote confirmed this:

> Right now my husband…they haven't a lot [of work] for him. So I'm basically the main person who is supporting my family, so I have a big role to do. My job is very important for my family, because without that, we can't survive.

Employment was also a link to society since it reduced isolation. As Malini shared: "I don't have any connection with the outside world, since I don't go to work, I don't have a job. I feel like I'm disconnected from the society. So, [it] makes me feel very very low sometimes." Finally, a few mothers expressed a desire to transmit the value of career for women by providing role modelling to

their children of being employed and financially independent. Surya's thoughts on career for women today reflect this:

> It's a very big part in their life. And especially, the mother must be educated and in a good position to raise a kid. It helps the kids to realize when they are growing, they always see the mother, not the father. They always – it's not only Sri Lankans, everywhere – it's the mother who does a big part in the kids' life. So, to give them a better understanding, and a good knowledge, every single thing, I think is in the mother's hand.

Personality and employment. In their narratives, participants described personality traits which they saw as significant to their career choices and employment efforts. The most frequently identified personality trait was being hardworking, and related aspects such as being determined, motivated and courageous in the face of adversity. Lakshmi described her working style: "At the factory, there are people who just idle you know? I do the maximum 8 hours, I work very hard, and then I'm paid for that, and I'm respected for that." Those who self-identified as being hard-working were proud of this quality and felt it made them stand out among employees. Their motivation and determination were apparent in their narratives of the struggle to succeed professionally.

Other qualities that emerged were teamwork and related traits such as friendliness, empathy, patience and sharing of knowledge. The women who narrated these qualities were mostly in care-giving professions where they had to work closely with others. Another grouping of qualities that emerged was desire

to be in control, ambition and directiveness. There seemed to be a link between these traits and educational level. The women who demonstrated these qualities pursued the longest studies in Sri Lanka and retraining in Quebec and held occupations with high levels of responsibility. Traits such as adaptability and desiring work-life balance were described as helping balance career goals with realistic occupational choices. To conclude, personality traits were perceived as playing a role in their career choices and in their skill at their employment.

Aspects of career re-imaging. While these women experienced life and job market realities in Quebec, they were confronted with the necessity of modifying their employment goals and their career trajectory. In response, they experienced a range of emotions and thoughts, reviewed hopes and plans, and made shifts in career goals and paths during their process of career re-imaging.

Evolution of ideas about employment. Several career expectations were challenged and questioned as a result of employment-related experiences. For women who were in occupations that required higher levels of educational training, the expectation of seamlessly continuing in their profession was put into question. Surya relates her astonishment:

> They say this land, we have a lot of opportunities here. When you migrate, that's what they say to you. But when you come, when you try to look for the place for your work, that's where you open your eyes.

These women who were formerly well-employed by Sri Lankan standards felt it was unreasonable that they didn't get hired in Quebec, one even after she had

accumulated Canadian work experience in Ontario. They believed their careers were stagnating since employment took too long to secure. As Malini stated, "I can't even think about having a career right now because I've gone back ten years career-wise. Year by year go[es] so fast, I don't feel any progress".

Some women who were employed in factory jobs reported positive thoughts about employment in Quebec. One strong belief was that if they were not lazy and were willing to work they could take advantage of available job opportunities. This was supported by the fact that there were opportunities to start businesses and that banks in Quebec were more willing to give loans than banks in Sri Lanka. The most prominent belief for these women was that work was the way to attain personal goals (e.g., home ownership, business ownership) and therefore stable employment was viewed as vital.

Evolution of emotions with employment experience. There was a range of negative and positive emotions related to their employment experiences and career development. Negative feelings sprang from having to relinquish their thus-far developed profession, from their difficulties securing satisfactory employment, and due to requirements of the process of career re-imaging. These women experienced disappointment, deep sadness, regret, frustration, and depression concomitant with specific negative events such as when they failed job interviews, when they had to accept factory work, or loss of social recognition and career identity. These are captured by Devi who was working in a factory at the time:

> Very sad, in this moment. Yeah. I think I [am] disappointed [with] my job. In Sri Lanka I did a good job. In here [Quebec], not like this. Yeah. I am disappointed for my job. In Sri Lanka I did a good job. In Sri Lanka I carry on the job every day. Here, no. Stop sometimes. Again lay off, break. Soon after, I start another job. It's very different from Sri Lanka. In Sri Lanka I did one job. Here, not like this. Various kinds of jobs in here. Changing, yeah. Three four months layoff, again start a job. Now again, layoff. In Sri Lanka I liked doing one job. Then I can manage, practice and improving. Here, I have to learn again another job. It's difficult.

They were disappointed by their career development in Quebec which was full of defeats, and they were saddened by the repercussions on their children's quality of life. As Malini explained:

> I came here to, like you know, better myself? And it seems it didn't happen. But since I'm a mother of two children, I have to put my personal goals aside, and try to do my best for the two girls. Give them the good life and at least give them a good education. But they're growing up and some of the things that they need, seems like I can't provide it for them. So that makes me feel very sad. Being on social assistance is also not always a good feeling for my self-esteem. So I feel bad about that.

These disappointments mounted over time and they felt frustration and anger at their situation. They found themselves not eligible for jobs that were available, and felt like outsiders, blocked from the professional sphere they used to be active members of. Feeling small, unimportant, and unnoticed was frustrating and saddening for these former professionals. A few women were especially frustrated and ashamed about having to work in manual labour positions for many years and about not having any other options. The deskilling that accompanied leaving their field was associated with lack of confidence and anxiety about returning to the job market. A sense of unfairness and injustice arose from the fact that they were not given a single opportunity to prove themselves on the workforce, even when they were willing to work for minimum wage.

Despite these feelings, most felt they were too entrenched in Quebec and therefore unable, due to legalization processes, established social connections, and shortage of finances, to move to English Canada. Only one woman moved to English Canada after years of unemployment and underemployment in Quebec. Despite remaining in Quebec, other participants had serious worries about the likelihood of working at all. As Malini who was unemployed explained:

> I…sometimes, I'm scared to think, what's the future going to be? That I will have a chance of getting employment? And if I didn't have a chance five, six years ago...so [now] what are the chances? Sometimes, for the sake of the children I try to think positively but that worry and the problem is inside me, although I don't talk

> about it or, try not to think about it, it's there. It's a reality sometimes, you know, it's, that's the reality.

Women who had been settled in Canada for longer and those who had more years of experience on the job market recognized more clearly the limitation of their career development due to lack of French fluency. Concurrently, these women encountered the necessity of realigning their employment expectations with Quebec realities, which was also a source of negative feelings.

In sum, the loss of social status that comes with unemployment and stalled pursuit of career aspirations had impacts on esteem and feelings of self-worth. Unemployment and underemployment were experienced as highly stressful and these women recounted crying when interviewing for factory jobs, feeling very low about themselves, and feeling that they were "going down career-wise". Shanthi shared her feelings about what her career means to her:

> So that's the, that's the, I think that's the most important thing: your career, to be…you know that you're worth something, you know. Because if you don't get that, you feel like you're useless and you're helpless.

Participants felt they belonged to a higher socioeconomic class in Sri Lanka and shared their feelings about how they were perceived by other Sri Lankans. Those who found work felt they didn't have the job stability that was necessary to improve their skills and develop their careers. They felt they deserved to have the recognition they had strived and sacrificed for in Sri Lanka. Suneetha managed social perception by presenting her current job to her Sri

Lankan peers as her professional choice to reduce stressful work due to her approaching retirement. Social recognition of their occupational status was very important to their career identity. As their social status was tied into their profession, many felt ashamed to state their occupation when they weren't able to occupy satisfactory occupations and felt a deep sense of loss in the decrease of career status. Surya stated, "Most of the time when we come here, you are going for the odd jobs. So you feel bad about it, like shame, and not satisfied. You are not happy when you are doing – career-wise – if you are doing a low job."

These women brought a lot from their employment in Sri Lanka to their occupations in Quebec. In addition to self-esteem and pride related to their profession, they had a set of career skills and work experience which they drew upon and served them well. Damayanthi explained this,

> I know as a daycare worker or nursery school teacher, I can do a lot of things, because of my past experience in my country. Especially what I did as a home science teacher: I had to do a lot of things like creativity, creative expression, and play arts. So that helped me to be in this field. When compared with the others, I can do much more, better things than them. That makes me feel good.

When these women were able to move towards their intended career path, they recounted positive emotions about their jobs. For most of them, reaching job satisfaction in Quebec occurred several years after resettlement. With time, some participants were able to obtain employment that increased their self-confidence, and self-esteem. When obtaining a higher status job that was closer to their

expectations, there was a sense of pride, satisfaction, and mostly, a feeling of happiness. Satisfaction occurred due to the social aspect of working outside the home, having an occupation that held a certain level of social status or experiencing a promotion, feeling that they had reached the peak of their professional development, and enjoying the job in which they were employed. Geetha recounted that it was a positive change to be able to work in an office, with friends, and be part of a team, and that she experienced the good feelings she had when she was working in Sri Lanka. Participants who attained job satisfaction disclosed that they could continue to work happily until retirement.

Realignment of expectations, goals and roles. The narratives of these women's career expectations and goals evolved with time and perceived stage of career development. Due to the crystallization of career identity that developed in Sri Lanka, these participants came to Canada with the desire to continue their career trajectories. Post-migration, their expectations were that their career development would continue its pre-migration trajectory and they planned to work without disruption. Suneetha stated: "Because I had my qualifications and experience, I had no doubt in obtaining a similar position here. I thought once I come here there would be so many openings and I would be able to work in a similar position."

However, the reality of the Quebec context obliged these women to reassess their hopes and plans. The beliefs of immigrants whose former occupations were highly language-based (e.g., stenographer, teacher) or whose retraining required French language fluency (e.g., architect, administrative

assistant) eventually changed and they believed that their careers were over and that their skills, knowledge, and experience would never be used again. As a result, they were obliged to re-evaluate and modify their career goals. Eventually, these women sought jobs in Anglophone work environments (e.g., English schools) or jobs that required minimal use of language (e.g., daycare work with young infants).

In addition to changes to their career expectations and goals, their roles also were modified. They had to relinquish their role of co-provider as they were faced with unsatisfactory employment options and the inefficiency of working for low wages while raising young children. They stopped seeking employment and became stay-at-home mothers as a temporary way of escaping their disappointing work situations. Nonetheless, because their financial pressures and internalized norms necessitated employment, all returned to work by the time their children were of school age.

The transformation of their career expectations demonstrated adjustment to their employment realities. The recent immigrants who were at the start of their employment-seeking efforts had dreams about their professional future. As Janani stated, "It matters to me. I think the daycare or Montessori, it's my dream. I like very much child[ren], I want to open this." The narratives of immigrants who had spent several years in Quebec and identified as being mid-career contained hopes of improving their occupational situations. Those who were not actively working expressed hopes of obtaining employment, and those who were employed hoped for occupational improvement through promotions. Geetha

shared that "I feel more job satisfaction now than when I was looking for work in the very beginning. I aspire to get to the next position as a supervisor". Those who had migrated one or more decades ago and perceived themselves as being towards the end of their career planned to remain in their current occupational situation and work until the standard age of retirement. Some treasured occupational dreams such as being a renowned architect or holding a position of higher status but those who were nearing retirement looked forward to it. Like many others, Suneetha stated that she was looking forward to retiring and to watching her children's achievements.

Trajectory of losing and re-establishing career. When they migrate, immigrants lose several sources of identification in the host society, such as family status, membership to a certain socioeconomic class, educational status, and career status. Social and psychological benefits are associated with work, and may have been a reason for participants' attempts to retain their former careers and career identities. Where the immigration experience involves multiple losses and changes, letting go of career identity without a compensatory source of validation and recognition was very distressing. They stated that their career defined not only their personal identity, but also their familial roles and social standing. In the migration process, their professional identity is a salient source of identification they wished to preserve. It took a variable amount of time to come to terms with the gradual disappearance of this former career identity. One common way of accepting this loss was viewing their career and status loss as a

trade-off for physical safety and a better future for their children. Surya, who had migrated with high hopes but later experienced disappointment, shared this:

> It's really a very sad situation here. Most the time we dream of things. Our main focus is that how do I achieve the dream? And coming here and losing everything. Yes we have like peaceful life here. I'm not saying that we lose every single thing. But, we have the living freedom compared to our countries. But deep inside, when you think back, and when you question yourself, who you are. You are nobody.

The rise from stagnation to contentment. In their narratives about career loss and re-establishment, adjustment to their first job was often emotionally difficult. Some experienced homesickness and intense sadness, others experienced job confusion, and some reported feeling low about themselves and dissatisfied with work. Those who were unable to pursue a satisfactory career experienced were unemployed, felt worthless at work, or experienced a loss of self-esteem. These participants identified with their former career identity and did not embrace the potential new identity linked to their current occupation. These women experienced a gradual erosion of career identity, goals and dreams. They were reluctant to let go their career and career identity but also felt they lost touch with their former career identity while they were out of their field.

With the passage of time, these women perceived themselves as "closing the chapter" on their previous careers. Part of relinquishing the pursuit of their ideal occupation involved accepting that they had to do other jobs for economic

survival. However, in their hearts they still felt tied to the professional identity which was part of their self-image in Sri Lanka. So, most of these women adopted their new occupational identity only partially and always presented their former career identity to Sri Lankans and peers in addition to their current job. They viewed their former occupation as a more accurate self-description and closer to their internalized self-image. However, women who had reached a satisfactory standing in their job- which equalled or exceeded their status in Sri Lanka - as well as women who found a renewed sense of responsibility in their new occupation identified more with their new profession than participants whose new occupations were not as rewarding. Suneetha partly identified with her new occupation by contextualizing it.

> Today I see, and I feel, that I am a daycare operator. But I look at it in a larger way because […] I look at the daycare operator job, with that sense of responsibility, and I try to mould the coming up generation, and help their families, and support them.

In their career re-establishment, having a career that matched their perceived social standing was very important. The women shared concerns about appearing to achieve less and attempted to maintain a certain image, saving face before their peers. Participants sometimes accepted lower status jobs quickly when they felt they could not simultaneously meet the challenges of resettlement and the demands of redeveloping their former careers. Often, the acceptance was temporary and they planned to resume their career pursuits after meeting immigration or family demands. As Devi illustrated:

> At the moment I am not strong, because of our landing paper. After we get our land paper, I start again my... I think I can start that normal development. And after, I can do the French course. Then I can continue like that in Sri Lanka. I don't give up anything. I'll start again.

Those who were unable to find a satisfactory profession sometimes temporarily gave up working on their career and sought fulfillment in their roles as mothers. But those who did so felt they were losing their image of worker and becoming housewives instead. This was reflected in Shanthi's quote:

> When you, when you lose that, for a long period when you're not working, you lose your touch, you know, you're not in the work force, you're in a different um, different environment right now, like at home. When you're at home, it's not the same as when you go to work. Umm, yeah I almost lost what I, my image was changed, like, you know. I became like a housewife instead of a worker, after that.

Further, putting career goals on hold and accepting a job temporarily was typically accompanied by frustration, regret and sadness. Surya spoke about how she sees herself since she was unable to attain her former career position:

> It's actually I'm not satisfied, inside. I always have the same feelings [about career] that I had when I was younger but I know that I can't reach there. Okay. Even though, I tried to fit into the market, the job market, and helping the family as much as I could,

> so that's what that I am doing now. I try to stay- I'm not saying that…. uhh, what do you call it? Just a hairdresser! That's it. Just a hairdresser.

Securing satisfactory employment took several years for almost all women. In this process, determination and perseverance were very necessary qualities. Shanthi strongly voiced the value of perseverance when trying to reach occupational goals. She said:

> Yes, it will be hard. It will be hard. So try to come out of it and use another direction and see what we can do. The thing that I did [that] works is that I moved. So, sometimes we have to do things that you don't like to do.

As part of this process, women felt strongly about being role models for their children and not being dependent on social assistance. Many kept living in hopes for a chance to prove themselves on the workforce and the opportunity to feel they were a worthwhile person. Malini shared her thoughts:

> I'm thinking, you know, once I finish my, the, the, the French classes, like you know, somebody will give me a chance, to like you know, stand up on my two feet without depending on the government for me to survive. So that way I can show my girls, like you know, like you know, as a role model, like you know, I'm earning a living rather than depending on the government. So that is something that I want to… show my two daughters. So I'm

> hoping, you know? Always hope for the best? … For myself too, you know? Not only for them, for my self-esteem too.

Despite the many challenges and difficult feelings women underwent, some immigrant women were able to find happiness, satisfaction and other positive outcomes from their career pursuits. Increases in salary, opportunities to experience various job positions, or learn about themselves were some of these aspects that brought satisfaction from their jobs. However, for these to be experienced, it often took years of acculturation and struggle to come to a point where they could appreciate aspects of their current job or occupation.

Psychological benefits of employment were significant: in some cases it provided a connection to society, a feeling of dignity, a feeling of self-worth, a sense of freedom and hope to achieve other dreams. They felt their professional identity partly gave them courage and dignity. Some believed they earned respect from family members and society due to their professional position. Surya explained:

> When the people recognize her position, the woman, they respect the woman. The respect is there. So when you get respect from the others and when they recognize you, she's a happy woman you know? Like she has no complaints, nothing to worry, no. And she can go anywhere with her head straight… So, for her it's a very big, very big, like, it's all her dignity in there… It really is, you know, even you will feel it. And you have a good career and you know where to go and you know what to do- you feel free! The

> freedom is there, eh? You don't have to worry okay what [am] I going to do next or keep wondering about this eh? You have your own thing! So it's very important.

Interestingly, securing satisfactory employment alone did not directly impact their career identity. Those women who were able to qualify for occupations which matched their former career or were at a satisfactory level retained their former career identity to some level, and expressed their new career identity in limited contexts. Their former career identity is strongly linked to their Sri Lankan identity and their newer career identity became tied to their newer Canadian identity.

Participants were able to see the positive aspects in their new occupation. An aspect that brought them a sense of worth was the recognition they received from coworkers, employers, clients and supervisors. They loved to be appreciated and valued. One felt that her previous work experience enriched her current job performance as she brought skills that her colleagues did not have because of their shorter training. The positive appraisals brought recognition of their value as professionals, as members of their team and organization, and engendered happiness. Other positive outcomes included being occupied, working with fewer responsibilities and job demands compared to in Sri Lanka, learning about a different field, or getting to know themselves better. In most cases they gained satisfaction from getting a better salary or from working outside the home, in an office or as part of a team. However, the best outcome was returning to their original career and career identity, which made them feel skilled, capable, and

happy. It was a wonderful experience to be wanted on the career front and to receive job offers for occupations they really liked. Shanthi explains:

> Yes, I got actually about three, four jobs at once. Because I was going for interviews and so I just chose one. I had so many opportunities and, I can choose now (laughs), which one to take, you know. So yeah, that was a real jump, for me…I felt really, good. And then I got my image back, like "Oh, wow, I can", I just remembered my Ottawa life, that I had before and I come that again. And I felt useful, like (laughs), when I was in Montreal I felt like I don't have anything, like something empty, you know? … And so now I'm getting back my image, and… I'm offered jobs that are in the area that I really like!

To summarize, the employment experiences of these immigrant women did not lead to the attainment of the career goals they had hoped and this necessitated a re-evaluation of these and that led to a shift in their career goals and employment choices. However, eventually many found some level of contentment after revising their occupational goals. Some of these satisfactions were derived from the social recognition they received, as well from accomplishments at work. Those who had been in Quebec longer and underwent educational re-certification experienced greater career satisfaction. Conversely, career dissatisfaction was more present among new immigrants to Quebec and among those who lacked educational retraining opportunities.

Cycling through stages in the career re-establishment trajectory.

Participants of this study were at different points in their career development at the time of the interviews. Certain stages in the process of losing and regaining a career identity emerged from the narratives. These stages were not universal and passage through them was dependent on several factors, including immigration class, immigration status, number of years in Quebec, nuclear family support, and retraining opportunities. Because of the individual differences in each of these factors, the stages were somewhat different for each woman, and therefore this is an initial portrayal of career identity evolution. While it was not identical for all participants, the career re-establishment trajectory generally proceeded from initial shock, to attempts to meet the Quebec workforce demands, to struggle to maintain former career identity, to final settlement with a level of acceptance of both their former and their current career and career identity. The progress on this continuum was dependent on several factors including number of years spent in Canada and retraining opportunities.

In the first stage, participants experienced shock and disappointment at the results of their initial job searches. The surprise occurred during tasks such as obtaining educational equivalence, sending out curriculum vitae, going for job interviews in their field, and while working in their first jobs in Quebec. During this stage participants reported how they became aware of the threat to their career and career identity. The clash between their wish to remain on the original career path and the obstacles to it in the Quebec context emerged. They underwent various difficult and painful emotions: feeling sad, disappointed and

frustrated, useless and unable to do anything, feeling they lost everything. There was a struggle to hold on to their self-perception as career women working at a certain level and resentment at having to change their career identity. Shanthi felt dismayed at the labourer position she had obtained because she used to work as a data entry operator:

> I'm not satisfying my career. Like it's not my job that I'm doing, […] What am I doing? I'm general labour! Because in Sri Lanka I had built my career as a typist and then now when I came here it was […] like I had in my mind that I can do it. And then when I was doing general labour […] then, I thought like I almost lost my skills […] like it's all gone, you know. Where to start and where to stop now, you know, so I was doing all these general labour jobs. […] Where I am going like, what is my career? I have never done and I am doing something that I, I am not willing to do it also! What is this, like you know? […] this is not my job, I haven't, not that the job is not good but I'm not […] I like to do something better for me, my satisfaction. […] You see, I can't continue as a job like this. Like, I have to change.

In the next stage, and sometimes concurrently, there was acceptance of the system and the restrictions in Quebec and attempts to secure employment at a more feasible level. During this period, some women took French language classes with the hopes of obtaining better employment after completion of classes. This period was also the time during which they sought retraining to obtain

Quebec educational qualifications in order to re-orient their careers. For some however, the option to take time away from work to retrain did not exist due to financial demands, so they felt they didn't have the choice of career orientation after migration. As Malini stated:

> I think I didn't have like a choice that mattered. I had to survive because I am, I am a single mother and I have two children. So, I didn't have a choice in that matter, so that's the job I was offered and I took it. Because, financially, I needed the money... So for that reason I couldn't pick and choose.

This stage was often accompanied by a feeling of career stagnation or a feeling of going backwards in their career development.

In the following stage, there was a struggle to seek better employment than what they were offered or alternatively to seek business proprietorship. If there was no success at this time, participants felt a sense of loss and that their career identities changed for the worse. Some resign themselves to being housewives and feel out of touch with the workforce. This was associated with feeling worthless and with low self-esteem.

Finally, there was a stage of settling down and acceptance of their career situation in Quebec as being final and that they couldn't attain anything higher. Participants narrated that they tried to create a separation between their former career and their current one, which helped create a sense of closure. Damayanthi felt that she had to put her former teaching career in the past and open a new chapter:

> Yeah, with time you know, when you get used to whatever you are doing so you forget, not forget I mean, the past you just leave and you continue with the work now you are getting used to. Leave is …now…now …we are not going to go back to the job so we just leave it there and you continue here.

During this time they recognized the other benefits of being in Quebec (e.g., for their children's education). If they obtained a better occupation than their initial occupation in Quebec, they often had positive feelings (e.g., happiness, satisfaction) about their current career status. Only one participant felt she renewed her original career identity. For her, it was a very big victory. For all participants, it was a difficult journey ("a rough, rough ride", Surya), to go from having a career identity as being a good professional in the occupation of one's choice to losing this identity and to getting back one's career identity. The journey was fraught with anger, disappointment and painful experiences (e.g., age discrimination). Suneetha remembered difficult times upon reflecting on her career identity evolution in Quebec:

> Well, when I look back, it was not an easy journey, from what I was in Sri Lanka to, be what I am today; there have been hard times, difficult times, where I was…upset, and angry, and sometimes felt frustrated.

In conclusion, the major themes of this domain are the centrality of career in these women's identity and the attachment to the professional identity they developed in Sri Lanka. Those who had to be financially independent due to

sponsorship had fewer opportunities to pursue retraining in Quebec, unlike those who arrived as refugees. In both types of cases, participants underwent a great disillusionment with the Quebec employment context because of the major limitations imposed on their employment opportunities. Their experience was underscored by an ongoing struggle to resituate themselves in the Quebec workforce and their trajectory is marked by varying periods of unemployment and underemployment. Women had to accept working in a job that meets only financial considerations while holding hopes of better employment. Only some women eventually gained satisfaction from their job. There is a stage-like process of career identity evolution, starting from shock and dissatisfaction with their situation, to working to meet the requirements of working in Quebec, to reaching a point of acceptance of their career status with satisfaction or dissatisfaction. This acceptance is somewhat dependent on acculturation and retraining. Some women, who experienced high dissatisfaction with their initial jobs and were able to retrain, did so and thus were able to attain a professional standing that was satisfactory to them.

Chapter V: Discussion

The findings represent a collection of the narratives of 10 Sri Lankan Sinhalese immigrant women who live or lived in Montreal. They are a heterogeneous group with respect to class of immigrant (refugee, family reunification/sponsored), level of fluency in English, prior occupation, immigration status in Quebec, years of work history and years of residency in Quebec. They are homogeneous with respect to ethnic identification (Sri Lankan Sinhalese), socioeconomic status (lower-middle to upper-middle class), sexual identity (heterosexual), and gender identity (female). While each of their stories was unique, several commonalities were present in their experiences and career identity development trajectories.

For the majority of participants in the study, migration to Quebec was prompted by the threat to safety posed by the civil war that took place in Sri Lanka from 1983 to 2009. None mentioned career dissatisfactions as the reasons for migration. A few women migrated through sponsorship by extended family members in Quebec and two migrated through marriage to Sri Lankan Canadians.

Positive Pre-migration Career Development

Participants of this study reflected on their career expectations and experiences in Sri Lanka in a positive light. There was alignment among their career values and goals, support from the family and systematic support from society. As a result of this combination of factors, their experience of education and work was mostly positive, matched their expectations, and helped them establish their career paths.

Centrality of career in self-identity propelled their career pursuits.

One of the key findings is the centrality of employment and career, the attachment to a specific occupation and the constancy of the desired profession for these women. Unlike in the post-migration phase, in which participants felt that their options are limited due to situational restrictions, their early career identity was perceived as a freely made choice. Despite requiring considerable personal investment, their initial profession was perceived as a good fit with their personality, values and self-concept. These factors contrasted with the experience of employment processes in Quebec, which include being forced into undesirable fields or occupations, not having the time to invest in professional re-certification, and usually not finding a good fit between occupations and career identities.

All these women pursued a direct course of studies towards their intended profession and did not re-orient their career in Sri Lanka. The congruence between these women's professional goals and the career paths they followed suggest a goodness of fit between their skills and the profession's requirements. This unwavering pattern appears to demonstrate that professional targets were developed early during studies, and remained focused on. Historically, the education system in Sri Lanka promoted early career choice. Students would have to choose a professional direction by the final years of the equivalent of high school, because at this point they are required to choose a stream for post-secondary studies (i.e., sciences, fine arts, and humanities). Continuing education and career re-orientation is a more recent trend and is less well established in Sri Lanka. Further, the educational system is intensively competitive and becomes

more so after junior high school level. Therefore students are highly encouraged to focus on their studies and tend to have high levels of motivation for studies. Also supporting their intensive focus on studies is the socio-economic reality of the lower and middle classes, where families support children completely during their studies, so changes in academic direction that require extending studies would be carefully examined. Given the level of commitment and sacrifice required during the preparatory years in school, career choices were not taken lightly and were expected to endure. Additionally, in the atmosphere of educational and professional competitiveness, their educational achievements were considered precious. These factors contextualize why these women needed to make early career choices and remain dedicated to them.

Sociocultural reinforcement as a motivator. Sri Lankan women have social, cultural, and familial motivators for employment and career development, in addition to their previously discussed intrinsic motivation. These women want to be perceived as an employed individual by their family and children because it increases self-esteem and earns respect. Also, their career development efforts were rewarded with positive feedback and encouragement from multiple sources (i.e., employers, peers) and are a significant boost to their self-esteem. In contrast, the lower incidence of positive reinforcement during employment in Quebec was significantly distressing, and added to the discontent of being away from the profession of their choice.

The finding that many women felt responsible for managing the family and for family finances is consistent with matrilineal patterns derived from

ancient Sri Lankan Sinhalese culture (Malhotra & Degraff, 1997). These ancient patterns combined with cultural modernization place heavier emphasis on women's education and occupation (Malhotra & Tsui, 1996). Statistics on Sri Lankan education show parity at 97% literacy rates for women and men between the ages of 15 and 24 (Ashford & Clifton, 2005) and greater secondary school enrolment among women than men (Ashford, Clifton, & Kaneda, 2006). Sri Lankan sociocultural indicators also have women in positions of power, for example, Sri Lanka had the first female prime minister in the world. As a result of this socio-cultural history, women are ascribed considerable responsibility and they play a strong role in family life and Sri Lankan society.

The shift away from the role of stay-at-home mothers to employment is indicative of another shift in the roles of Sri Lankan Sinhalese women. Although employment has been an option for women for many decades, it was the economic liberalization policies of 1977 combined with the recent westernization of values that created greater opportunities for and expectations of employment. Even from a sociological perspective, having a career is considered an asset for a middle-class Sinhalese woman (Malhotra, 1991).

As previously discussed in the literature review, of all South Asian nations, Sri Lanka shows the best demographic indicators for women's overall well-being and education. The sociocultural indicators include equal access to education and factors improving women's power to negotiate career and family life choices. Some of these indicators are the higher rate of women's school completion compared to men's, a later average age of marriage attributed to

lengthening education, the highest rate of female-headed households, and the lowest birth rate of South Asian nations with the highest child survival rate (De Silva, 2008). The women in this study exemplify this sociocultural portrait of women's condition in Sri Lanka.

Later-life Career Obstacles are Challenging and Resisted

While resettling in Quebec, these immigrant women underwent fundamental career-related experiences in common. These experiences began with a shattering of their career-related expectations and hopes followed by an emotional processing of their negative affect. This continues through a growing awareness and recognition of real barriers to employment such as language, retraining and discriminations, and where possible, becoming engaged in an occupational rebuilding process.

Contrast between early career development and post-migration career progress. The career identities and development of the participants contained two distinct phases - the first in Sri Lanka and the second in Quebec. These two phases have distinct characteristics which influenced their career development in different ways. As the findings show, these women established a cherished career identity in Sri Lanka. This was a period of planned and steady progress in their education towards the profession of their choice. Work experiences in Sri Lanka were sources of pride and satisfaction. Career decision-making tended to be autonomous as participants sought occupations that fit their unique skills, interests, values and personality and their personal wishes were guided their career decision-making. This pattern of career development nicely

encompasses career theories that describe outcomes as a fit between person and environment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984; Holland, 1997).

In contrast, immigration disrupted what had been a relatively seamless trajectory of education, work and career development when they immigrated to Quebec. None of the immigrants who remained in Quebec returned to their former occupation and they underwent major occupational transitions.

Migration-induced change requiring career transformation. The lifecycle is posited to be composed of stages and continuous changes, accompanied by predictable stresses, help transition from one stage to the next (Carter & McGoldrick, 2003). Migration, on the other hand, represents an unpredictable change – which can disrupt developmental life cycle events. Discontinuous change is disruptive to ongoing developmental tasks because it is not a gradual linear progression but a complete transformation from the status quo (Carter & McGoldrick, 2003).

There is evidence that discontinuous change causes great distress and threatens one's worldview. These disturbances may amplify into post-traumatic stress disorder with the individual eventually returning to normal functioning (Bonanno, 2004), or they may become catalysts for dramatic life change as seen in adversarial or post-traumatic growth (Baumeister, 1991; Linley & Joseph, 2005; Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004). After destabilization resulting from traumatic life events, some individuals may reinterpret events positively and make meaning out of adversity (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004). These nonlinear changes brought about changes in priorities, awareness of personal strength and recognition of new

life paths among the participants. Similarly, growth through appreciation of life and a shift in priorities, generation of more intimate relationships with others, a greater sense of personal strength, recognition of new possibilities or paths for one's life, and spiritual development were found in other research on destabilizing life changes (Ho, Chan, & Ho, 2004; Rosenbach & Renneberg, 2008). As in this study, other narrative studies of traumatic events revealed that affective engagement and cognitive processing of the challenge are two essential components of adversarial growth (King, Scollon, Ramsey, & Williams, 2000; Pals & McAdams, 2004; Pennebaker, 1997).

Similar to studies on individuals who experienced life transformations, these women experienced a "crystallization of discontent" (Baumeister, 1994). During periods of distress, where incongruent, disturbing, and contradictory information from multiple sources accumulate to form a pattern of negative and dissonant thoughts (Bauer et al., 2005; Baumeister, 1991), the individual is destabilized but is also open to new information and the exploration of potentially more adaptive associations and arrangements (Hayes et al., 2007). Change in perspective was more likely to occur in the face of enduring negative affect that increased unhappiness and increased motivation to modify one's view of self (Heatherton & Nichols, 1994). The participants' experiences during resettlement in Quebec parallel this pattern of openness to adaptation following struggles to maintain status quo.

Reskilling necessary for career continuation seems insurmountable.

The steps required for language learning, equalization of education and entry into protected professions are quite extensive. Although immigrants have been shown to have a strong work ethic and work holds an important place in their lives (Krau, 1984), the efforts in resuming their career trajectories seemed to no avail. Participants' experiences and descriptions of their process of preparing to enter the workforce represented considerable costs to them. These steps are highly time and monetarily consuming, and made the consideration of alternative careers and professions necessary. In the final analysis, these immigrants had little employment success, which mirrors the same finding do poorer employment success among newly arrived Canadian immigrants (Reitz, 2001).

To have educational qualifications recognized in Quebec, immigrants must send existing degrees to the Minister of Education in Quebec, where they are equalized to Quebec educational qualifications. Those with undergraduate university degrees received equalizations to first year of undergraduate studies. Though this difference may appear easy to eradicate, in reality participants' process was quite complex and lengthy. Entry into university programs requires a Quebec CEGEP degree equivalent. To enter a Quebec CEGEP and obtain CEGEP equivalent, applicants must have a Quebec High School diploma. In order to obtain the High School diploma, applicants need to pass Secondary V French, English and Math classes. The most challenging of these is the French class. The most commonly needed qualification among these participants was high school equivalence (i.e., English, Math, and French at high school secondary

five level, plus certain content areas). Armed with the high school equivalence certificate, they could enter professional training or adult education for diplomas in their field of interest.

The barrier of professional accreditation was not named by participants but is worthy of mention. Those who were members of protected professions have the additional hurdle of accreditation or licensing in Quebec. These associations limit entry to those having completed the relevant studies in Quebec, or to those having studies that are recognized as equivalent by the Quebec Minister of Education and having professional French fluency. As a result of this arduous process, which invariably led to lower levels of recertification, these immigrants had little employment success, which is typical among newly arrived Canadian immigrants (Reitz, 2001).

These participants arrived in Quebec with the expectation of maintaining their career trajectories, and during the early years in Quebec they strove to replicate their employment trajectory and career identity. Similarly, Mak, Westwood, Ishiyama, and Barker (1999) stated that "the majority of newcomers tend to have clear goals for continued career and educational success and are often prepared to work very hard to attain these goals in the new country" (p. 79). However, they could not achieve their former goals despite working on the concrete barriers described above. In addition to these concrete barriers, they faced more subtle barriers, such as tripping up on values and norms of the host society, which newcomers are unaware of. Participants shared that there were occasions when they did not understand the norms and values at work. Social

competency vis-à-vis in the host society and intercultural effectiveness often improve through acculturation. In the meantime, the lack of these competencies may constitute early "invisible" barriers to their employment and career development.

Family responsibilities impede career continuation. Due to their gender, these women's roles engendered a "double burden" (Dion & Dion, 2001) of paid employment followed by unpaid household and childrearing tasks. Balancing the demands of career development with their personal and family lives sometimes forced participants to take a break from their career pursuits to focus on childrearing, or obliged them to accept any immediately available employment. Given that most participants described being simultaneously employed and responsible for childrearing and domestic duties, it is possible that the pre-existing balance of household duties remained and resulted in the lack of time for re-certification. The effects of the double burden on immigrant women's lives include depression (Noh, Speechley, Kaspar, & Wu, 1992). Despite this double burden (Dion & Dion, 2001), a few women attempted to begin and complete professional re-training. These attempts are likely motivated by the anticipated benefits of better employment, such as greater income, and result in better psychological well-being (Gore & Mangione, 1983). The participants retrained despite the challenge of having to pay for education, which was provided free of charge in Sri Lanka. They related wishing for educational financial assistance and none were aware of governmental student assistance

programs, which would be important information to be transmitted to immigrant women.

Factors such as participants' age, discrimination at interviews, and questionable job availability in the future were perceived as obstacles to their career development. The consequence of being excluded from the job market and not having the time to re-qualify, was being faced with the contrast between their cherished former career identity and the occupational image they now projected. Participants had to make significant career re-orientations, and lowered their expectations to accept any opportunity to work and prove their capabilities. This discrepancy between their career identity and current career situation affected their roles within the family. While participants formerly viewed themselves as career role models for their children, they were now forced into a position of financial dependency on the government or reduced means. For mothers, this change in their career status generated internal conflict. The importance of socializing children, especially South Asian immigrant daughters, to seek high educational achievement is consistent with the literature (Justin, 2003; Naidoo, 1984; Naidoo & Davis, 2000) and may underscore the internal tensions they experienced when unable to portray this through role modeling. This dissonance between their internalized career identity and their new career situation impacted several participants by forcing them to re-evaluate their career identity and modify it.

Decrease in career-related recognition affecting emotional well-being. The decrease in personal and social employment-related recognition partly contributed to disappointment with employment in Quebec. As a solution to unemployment and underemployment, a few immigrants recommended that Sri Lankans who plan to migrate to Quebec complete all necessary career-training prior to arrival. However, this is a double-edged sword because those skills and qualifications are likely to not be recognized by the educational and licensing boards in Quebec. In addition, some training needs to be upgraded periodically, which will increase the likelihood of having to retrain by the time immigration is completed. Also, such a recommendation is problematic because it may lead to the expectation of employment upon arrival, even though many who followed language courses and obtained Quebec educational qualifications did not secure employment at the pre-migration level.

The near impossibility of returning to former career positions is viewed as being primarily due to the French barrier in Quebec. As a result, many Sri Lankans eventually move from Quebec to English Canada to improve their employment opportunities. Moving to English Canada improves occupational success and facility of entering the job market, which is exemplified by one participant's professional success after moving, and which she experienced as a personal victory. However, the majority of the participants could not move easily because their spouse and/or children were settled in Quebec.

Mid-life Career Re-definition and Career Identity Re-imaging

Career viewed as the embodiment of the self. Career and work are the embodiment of the self for the participants of the study. The relationship between career identity and global identity was illuminated through this study. Career identity affected feelings about the self, influenced their roles as wives, mothers, and their perceived social standing. Being excluded from preferred professions heightened the contrast between formerly held self-image and recently developing self-image. The process of significant career re-orientation required lowering expectations to the point of accepting any work opportunities in order to prove one's capabilities. The process of adaptation and change was quite difficult. This process occurs under difficult conditions, such as the presence of multiple stressors, the lack of emotional support, and little systemic support. This process is also difficult because it almost always requires adjusting to a self-image of lower status than before.

This discrepancy between career identity and current employment extends to roles within the family. Individuals who formerly viewed themselves as career role models for their children were now forced into financial dependency or reduced means. For mothers, this change in career status generated internal conflict because of the discrepancy with their life roles. This dissonance between their internalized career identity and their new occupation forced a re-evaluation of career identity. This re-evaluation was also propelled by having to lower their career goals and expectations, career reorientation, increased financial dependency, and cognitive dissonance between internal career identities and

current occupational identity. The re-evaluation was also associated with negative affect (e.g., sadness, frustration, hopelessness, feeling unworthy, feeling useless), lower self-esteem, and internal conflict regarding family roles.

Sri Lankan women's careers are strongly connected to their family roles (Attanapola, 2004). The responsibilities they had towards their nuclear and extended families restricted their retraining possibilities and increased their need to find rapid employment. Ironically, some women were so disheartened by the career options available to them that they postponed their income-earner role and put their energies into home-based roles. This career demoralization may be reflected in the depressed mood that some reported, the intense sadness others experienced, or the hard-fought struggles to regain former career identity. Career-specific demoralization is demonstrated in the case of the participant who experienced regaining her former career and career identity as a glorious personal victory, and compared it to "being a fish returning to water". Erikson's theory of identity development (Dunkel & Sefcek, 2009; Strayer, 2002) maps well onto the finding that identity in various spheres (e.g., career vs. parent) develops separately and at different paces (e.g., identity formation as a parent could be active while career identity could be in moratorium). This may explain the shift in focus from the career sphere to the parental sphere that occurred for several participants.

The bi-directional interrole transfer (i.e., transition back and forth between roles of parent and worker) underscores the relationship among the several spheres of life. The spheres of marriage, family, and occupation were found to contribute to an individual's life structure (Levinson & Levinson, 1996). This

research provides a starting point for future research and career development models specifically for immigrant women. Such research and theory needs to attend to immigrant women's multiple roles and identities, to the extended nature of their familial and social network, and recognize the non-linear aspects of their career development.

These findings also reflect the significance of occupational roles to an individual (Super, 1957, 1980, 1990) and support the concept of occupational roles as life roles (Super, 1957, 1980, 1990). Elements of Gottfredson's theory of Circumscription and Compromise (1981) such as career compromise were supported because during occupational transformation as immigrants were forced to make more realistic career choices in light of the multiple contextual factors (e.g., supporting family financially, time needed to retrain). Career circumscription based on gender roles was not intentionally undertaken; however, several chose occupations that fit with female gender roles (e.g., daycare educator). Career circumscription based on career status was not possible because career compromise forced them into occupations of a lower status.

The career transformation of immigrant women presents differences from the cycle described in work role transition theory (Nicholson, 1984, 1989). The first difference is the absence of a period of preparation for change prior to migration. Next, the encounter with change phase does not represent a discrete period of working in a new position; instead the encounter occurs over an extended period of time during which individuals make several forays into the labour market. The adjustment also appears to take place over a period that can

extend to several years, as individuals try to find the best fit between their qualifications and the roles that are available to them. They may undertake training to upgrade their skills during this time, as they attempt to find better fit between their internalized career identity, and the available options. Once an acceptable occupational role is found, the period of stabilization may be longer than projected by Nicholson (1981) due to cultural value conflicts and adjustments necessary for immigrants. Preparation for future repetition of the cycle did not appear in this study, possibly because immigrants who migrate for the purposes of long-term settlement don't plan for future career change but rather career stabilization. Because the occupational work role transition immigrants undergo is different from that of an individual who is in his native social surroundings and negotiating a change in career role, the cycle of work transition stages would require some adjustment to be more reflective of immigrant women's work role transitions; but they represent a helpful lens of progression.

Work role exit theory appears to capture the essence of career-oriented immigrants' exit from one career: "disengagement from a [work] role that is central to one's global identity and the reestablishment of an identity in a new role that takes into account one's ex-role" (Ebaugh, 1988, p. 1). A fundamental aspect of the context of leaving the work role is individual choice to leave an occupational role. While this was not the case with the immigrants in this study, some or all of the stages of the theory, namely doubting, seeking and weighing work role alternatives, negotiating work role turning points, and establishing a new role, were present in career role exits.

Although the four stages of role exit theory seem too simplistic to capture the complex internal processes of career role exit for immigrants, several elements of this theory (e.g., level of willingness to make the role exit) bear relevance to immigrant women's employment experiences. For example, participants had little willingness and little choice about changing their work role, their occupational roles were central to their identity, their occupational role exits were irreversible and permanent, these role changes occurred to them but not to their peer group or cohort – which singled them out, and the occupational role exit occurred not sequentially but simultaneously with other role exits (e.g., employee role, Sri Lankan national role). Also as considered in the theory, a single exit from the occupational role was the norm, awareness that they were permanently exiting the occupational role only cemented after a long time – after they had secured other aspects of settlement and had made attempts to return to their former occupational role, the social desirability of their new occupational role – or lack thereof – was low, and there was an institutional aspect to their exclusion from career roles as institutions – ranging from educational institutions, ministerial institutions, and employment institutions - barred entry into new occupational roles.

The desire to have a career for personal wellbeing was interesting in light of the western stereotype that employment is not a significant role for women in traditional eastern cultures. For women in the study, career was more than a source of income; it was a method of role modeling, a means of sharing of family responsibilities, and a source of personal fulfilment.

Interestingly, academic aptitude was not spoken of as a fundamental part of early career choice. Personal choice and personality traits appeared to play stronger roles in career choice. In addition, social recognition was very important and interpersonal relationships played a role in career choice. These were the most commonly reported variables of decision-making. Thus, while academic aptitude may be an important factor in career decision-making among career theories developed for North American populations, in certain cases academic aptitude may be trumped by factors that have greater importance to culturally different individuals (e.g., social recognition of career).

Career development choices are based on personal and family life demands. Career identity has been defined in various studies with the terms occupational identity (Ashforth & Kreiner, 1999), professional identity (Ibarra, 1999), and career sub-identity (Hall, 1971, 2002). Participants used the word "image" to refer to career identity, highlighting the external nature of career identity as a key characteristic, and also emphasizing the interactive aspect of career image. Career identity clearly affected the shaping of positive or negative feelings, such as pride or sadness, through which it influenced individuals' overall self-esteem.

Those who sought work immediately upon arrival enjoyed a source of income and financial independence but did not obtain a match with their existing career identity. Those who found employment immediately tended to remain in initial occupations and few moved towards their pre-migration field or occupation. Among those who sought language or other training, the work found

initially did not match expectations, usually because language skills, educational qualifications and work experience were insufficient for the occupations that matched their former career identity. However, more workers in this group achieved occupational status that was similar to their former occupation or that was satisfactory to them. Thus, longer acculturation periods and preparation prior to entering the workforce contribute to improved job options in the mid-term and greater match between occupation and career identity in the long-term. Identification with a new field or occupation necessitates investment of time into training and job opportunities that are higher status than those in typical employment enclaves. Unfortunately, research has shown that many immigrants don't have many opportunities for adjustment and retraining and get trapped in employment enclaves (Godin & Renaud, 2005).

Interest and motivation to retrain and invest in former career trajectory decreased with age, reflecting changing motivations in later life which were oriented towards personal life activities and social interactions more than career advancement and prestige-seeking. This pattern was also observed by Schwall (2009) in a Caucasian working population in the United States of America. Age is an important factor to consider in the career development motivations of immigrant women, especially older immigrant women and those with increasing family responsibilities (e.g., "sandwich generation" women who care for young children and aging parents or in-laws with whom they cohabit in extended family systems). Being aware of their life cycle stage and the discrepancy between their life tasks and the tasks that career development demanded of them led to internal

turmoil (e.g., feeling out of place as students, tension between re-skilling due to parenting demands).

The support network played a very useful role in employment processes. Using the support network for information, social learning, and emotional support is consistent with previous research where employers and coworkers were important influences on career identity creation, development and maintenance (Ibarra, Kilduff, & Tsai, 2005). Obtaining actual jobs through the support network was not commonly reported in the literature. However, business ownership was frequently viewed as a viable occupational option and is consistent with previous research showing the majority of Asian business ownership is held by Asian immigrants (Bates, 1994). In this group, entrepreneurship is partly motivated by limited access to the professions, desire for better occupational status and motivation to earn income and contribute to the family.

Occupational status as an important part of identity. After immigration, individuals lose sources of standing such as family status, accoutrements of social class, community recognition, educational certification, and occupational status. In light of these losses, retention of professional identity has greater importance for immigrants. Great distress occurred when individuals were stripped of the social status derived from professional occupations and from the possibility of professional advancement. Social status and ranking is very important in Sri Lankan culture since it was based on a caste system. Although the strictures of caste have greatly decreased, influence of this system appears at many levels - social, economic, and cultural. One of the ways of overcoming the

disparagement and limitations of belonging to a lower caste is through education and occupation. Therefore, professional achievement and status has great significance for these women, and possibly more than it would in non caste-based cultures.

The benefits of satisfactory employment become more important when other sources of satisfaction and self-esteem are lost. Varying levels of identification with their former career identity existed along with the public presentation of their former professional identity despite no longer working in that sector. This is consistent with the finding that individuals who viewed themselves as members of a profession will be more likely to attempt to remain in the profession when they have no intention to leave the profession and a situational factor, such as migration, forces them out of the profession (Blau, 2000; Blau, 2003; Blau & Lunz, 1998). Also, older individuals who were satisfied with their jobs are much less likely to have intentions of leaving them (Blau & Lunz, 1998; Cotton & Tuttle, 1996), which may explain the reluctance of older immigrants to retrain for a new profession or field. For these reasons, participants' career image as a tradesperson (e.g., hairdresser, machine operator) saddened them and participants continued to discuss their former occupational identity with Sri Lankan peers.

The importance of career identity was also seen in the resistance to accepting a change in career identity. Career defines not only occupational roles, but also family roles and social status. The satisfaction, pride, status, respect, self-confidence and self-esteem these immigrant women derived from career and

professional pursuits were significant and appeared to generalize to overall self-esteem. Because of the loss of status after migrating, and because of the status, recognition, and belonging gained through an occupation, it is possible that career took on greater significance after migration, as a means of compensating for losses and fulfilling psychological needs. The process of coming to terms with loss of career identity was lengthy and idiosyncratic. Coming to accept the loss and the decision to remain in Quebec, despite professional and personal drawbacks, was achieved by viewing the loss as the price of immigration to a developed country. The potentials inherent in a new and better life in Canada were very strong attractions, as were safety from war, a better future for their children, and the hope of long-term professional advantages.

Challenges of relaunching career during resettlement. The complexity of launching into a new field and career or starting afresh a new occupation in a familiar field is daunting, especially while resettling in a new country, and raising a family with little support. The transition to a new culture results in acculturation, which necessitates linguistic, sociocultural, and psychological adjustment to the host culture (Olmedo, 1979; Searle, & Ward, 1990). Acculturation to the cultural, economic and social systems could take several years, and was a factor beyond their control which affected their employment processes (Cook, Heppner, & O'Brien, 2005). Linguistic adjustment to the French language was not sufficient for any of the immigrants in the study to resume former occupations in Quebec. In addition, deskilling (Raghuram &

Kofman, 2004) or skill-discounting (Esses, Dietz, & Bhardwaj, 2006) were experienced by all, and is a problem encountered by many immigrants in Quebec.

Participants were formerly socialized according to a Sri Lankan normative lifecycle. According to the typical Sri Lankan lifecycle, the stage of studying and seeking professional qualifications is from childhood through young adulthood. Adult education was uncommon in Sri Lanka: until 1980 no university offered evening programs for those working or doing childcare during the day (Wijayratne, 2006). Thus, adult education and retraining is an activity that is asynchronous and may be associated with discomfort or other negative emotion. Further, Sri Lankans are unfamiliar with the Canadian educational system, which is very different from the British educational system they studied in. The discomfort stemming from life task asynchrony is an additional layer in their acculturation.

The considerable efforts required for the tasks of resettlement, re-certification and acculturation cannot be sustained for long periods without support. The challenging multiple changes that accompany migration and resettlement, which occur in the context of weaker social support, place great stress on immigrants to create stability for themselves and their families. This contributes to the necessity of making critical decisions about which tasks to attend to. These immigrants were less likely to invest effort in tasks they perceive as uncertain to produce successful outcomes (e.g., French language learning, long retraining programs) (Aycan & Berry, 1996) and more likely to invest their energy in tasks perceived as able to generate a guaranteed payoff (e.g., enclave

employment opportunities, being a stay-at-home mother and eliminating childcare expenses). Because career-related decisions continue to be made for several years after immigrating, support and information during this period can influence career outcomes in subsequent decades.

Career adaptation requiring re-imaging of self. Cross-cultural adjustment includes cognitions, emotions, and behaviours (Kim, 1988) and these elements were clearly present in the participants' career identity change processes. The presence of all of these cognitive, affective, and behavioural elements is suggestive of the occurrence of profound identity change as they reform their career identities. It may be that the career changes they underwent co-occurred with cultural change as adaptation to their new career identity required cross-cultural learning. The Cross-Cultural Life-Career Development Framework (Chen, 2008) which attends to the larger systemic barriers, the social interactional influences and the individual vocational identity change processes, captures most of the influences and stressors linked to career identity re-imaging.

Their Sri Lankan career identity was a source of personal pride and satisfaction due to a sense of achievement. Participants perceived their Sri Lankan career identity as their "true" career identity because they had more freely chosen and pursued it. While one participant who regained her former career identity experienced it as a triumphant victory, most participants were unable to return to their former professional activities and the transformation of their career identity was accompanied by a concurrent decline in self-esteem. When participants established themselves in a profession of lower standing compared to

their former one, they tended to perceive their Canadian career identity as the compromise professional activity, given the restrictions on their employment. These findings demonstrate how career identity development in Quebec can be a catch-up game, where participants, through affective, cognitive, social and behavioural strategies, try to mitigate the transformation of their career identity, which is intricately tied to self-concept and social standing. The result of re-imaging their career identity could be satisfaction or discontent, depending on their current occupation and on the extent to which they had achieved their modified career goals. The implications are that career identity can be redefined in later life, however this process may be initially resisted as it may be related to a decrease in self-esteem.

To conclude, the work and career narratives of these women underscore the importance of career to individuals' psychological, social, familial and financial well-being. Being unable to hold that identity has repercussions on their self-esteem and their role as a family provider. Other than the psychological aspects of self-confidence and self-worth from their career, the strength they obtain from having a stable and respectable occupation enables these women to carry on with life and face the challenges of migration during a period of tremendous acculturation and in the absence of the support of their extended family system. The acculturation process challenges many fundamental beliefs and values and generates a disorienting review of these. In Quebec, these women also experienced social, economic and administrative systems that operate quite differently from those in Sri Lanka and that required adjustment. Having a career

from which they derive recognition and approval and which provides a sense of continuity and stability can help significantly mitigate the confusion and instability they undergo during the initial years post-migration.

Findings of this study, such as lowered educational equivalence, challenges to integration of former professions, poorer employment success among immigrants, were also found by others studying different groups (Sinacore, Mikhail, Kassan, & Lerner, 2009; Xu, 2006), providing evidence of commonalities with the occupational integration of educated and previously-employed immigrants to Quebec. The impact on career identity bears resemblances as well, with participants experiencing the loss of their educational and career identities and re-evaluating their career identity (Sinacore et al., 2009). Together, these studies underscore commonalities in immigrant career identity re-adjustment and the relevance of these factors for immigrant career identity models.

Implications

Implications for theory and research. Career experiences of immigrants vary vastly depending on the reasons for immigration. Immigrants immigrating for business opportunities or following professional recruitment exert choice and self-direction, whereas immigrants who migrate or are displaced due to external circumstances exert little choice. This study shed light on how migration disrupts the progress of established career trajectories, threatens career identities, and demands individuals undergo a process of career re-imaging.

As a result of the Sri Lankan civil war and the 2006 Tsunami, migration from Sri Lanka to Quebec has vastly increased (Statistics Canada, 2001a). Research and discourse on visible ethnic minorities have focused on African American, Hispanic, and Far East Asian groups. Little research has examined the migration-related experiences of South Asian ethnic minorities (Justin, 2003). The few research studies on Sri Lankan populations have focused on health, stress, and immigration. Finally, research had not examined the career identity of Sri Lankan Sinhalese immigrant women after migration to Quebec. This research was conducted to fill this gap.

The influence of acculturation, family support and involvement on occupational preference and career choice among Asian Americans (Castelino, 2004; Tang et al., 1999), language skills and immigration status on employability (Godin & Renaud 2002; Xu, 2006), and double burdens (Dion & Dion, 2001) on career development are supported by the findings of this study.

Future research could use developmental approaches as a lens to examine how individuals' life stage affects their investment in career re-development after migration. The results of this study indicate that individuals were aware of the life stage they were at and compared whether their professional pursuits had developed at the expected pace or to the expected level. This study found that individuals' goals and choices are qualitatively different between early adulthood and mid-adulthood. The developmental theories of Levinson (1986) and Jung (1933) posit that midlife starts from 35-40 years and ends between 55-60 years of age. When individuals felt their career had not developed as expected by mid or

late adulthood, their perspectives on the significance of career changed and they found different benefits from their new occupations (e.g., developing different skill areas, providing service to a different client base, having more time for family). Those who were between early to mid-adulthood reported some occupational dissatisfaction as well as more hope and plans for future career development. Similarly, older participants exhibited a greater tendency to compromise on their career ambitions than younger participants. Late adulthood is characterized by a move away from mastery of the outside world and attainment in society to a focus on the inner self and the emergence of the hidden self that was undeveloped during the first half of life (Jung, 1933). Tasks focus on deepening connections to work, family, health, and creativity and connections to the self (Howenstine, Silverstein, Newton, & Newton, 1992). New values can orient this developmental period (Hall & Norby, 1973). Acceptance of physical limitations and of personal losses relating to relationships, positions, and self-esteem need to occur for advancement (Corlett & Millner, 1993). Disillusionment about erroneous past beliefs and assumptions (Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson, & McKee, 1978) and life structure modification (Levinson & Levinson, 1996) typically occur, whether overtly or covertly. Likewise, in this study, participants in their mid-fifties and beyond demonstrated awareness of personal limitations and personal losses in their narratives. In addition, a shift in focus of behaviour away from career advancement and towards caring for family and focusing on the next generation was visible among older participants who were close to 65 years of age. This pattern is more comprehensible when considering

that when they lived in Sri Lanka the age of retirement was 55 years. Taken together, these suggest a shift in values and in priorities takes place, moving from less career-focused to more interpersonally-focused, and support the theory proposed by Jung (1933).

Career development theories have been criticized for their cultural insensitivity (Brown, 2000). Their applicability to multicultural populations is very limited because they ignore racial discrimination and differential opportunities (Cheatham, 1990), they have assumptions that ignore minority group sociocultural realities (Leong & Brown, 1995), and don't account for social class and level of academic achievement (Arbona, 1996). The results of this study suggest that issues of racial discrimination, ageism, tokenism, social status, and level of academic achievement play a clear role in the employment experiences and career development of immigrants. These findings provide support to some of the critiques of generic career development theories which overlook discrimination, ethnic minority status, and sociocultural realities. Further research on immigrant employment and career identity can bolster these critiques (Swanson & Fouad, 1999) and lend to support the growing need for culture-specific career development theories (Leong & Brown, 1995; Osipow & Littlejohn, 1995; Swanson & Gore, 2000).

Identity theories that highlight the influence of social systems throughout the lifespan are more suitable to understanding the career identity development of immigrants because of the significance of sociocultural factors in shaping and maintaining their career identity. As posited by Osipow (1983) and Super (1957),

identity is multifaceted, comprising overlapping identities such as gender, ethnicity, social class, culture, and occupation and shaped through a social learning process. The career adjustment model proposed by Rasouli, Dyke and Mantler (2008) contains several aspects of employment which were also examined in this study (e.g., linguistic fluency, acculturation, parenthood, job experience, discrimination, education, financial resources, number of years lived in Canada, social support networks) and provide support for their importance in immigrant women's career development. The Cross-Cultural Life-Career Development Framework (Chen, 2008) fits very well with the findings and is a very appropriate lens for understanding immigrant career identity development. This framework merits further attention for use with immigrant women.

Identity is greatly shaped by social norms which are gradually internalized by the self (Mead, 1934) and interactions with others. Building on Mead's social perspective on identity development (1934), Law, Meijers and Wijers (2002) examined contemporary career and identity development and identified several aspects of career identity learning. First of all, awareness of one's social self compared to others was sharply present during the career re-imaging process, and failure to achieve status engendered negative emotions such as depression. In the career re-imaging process, a personal narrative was developed which contains characters, obstacles, dilemmas, actions and solutions, and where the self is discursive yet maintains a sustained core. Also, work roles became less important as other roles, for example domestic roles, were found to offer more fulfilment (Law, 2000). In some cases, participants had to find ways to represent their own

experience using terms that fit common language, thus finding ways to express a personal construct such as "women's work" in a commonly understandable way. Some participants also had to develop an individual perspective on work which managed the expectations and feedback of others. There was an assessment about the extent to which work exists for survival versus for self-actualization and to what extent they were willing to risk comfort and security for self-actualization.

A re-definition of identity through stories about the self and about career is supported by the study. Similarly, the life story model of identity development proposes that identity is not a fixed concept but is a life story which is constantly evolving through re-storying due to social interactions (McAdams, 2004). Furthermore, the cultures in which individuals are raised lead to shared themes among groups of individuals (McAdams, 2004). This approach to career identity re-definition is consonant with the findings of this study. The main storyline of this study is that Sri Lankan Sinhalese women migrated to Quebec after the age of 25 with fully crystallized career and professional identities through their engagement with the world of work (Super & Knasel, 1981). During their residency in Quebec, their life experiences were part of an evolving life story which shaped their career identity. Social learning and interpersonal feedback contributed to reassessment of career direction and investment in their career role. Over time, they realized that they had to modify their career goals and trajectory significantly as it was not possible to immediately resume work in their former profession. Situational factors played the biggest role in their career development and career identity evolution in Quebec. These women made realistic

modifications to their goals and made compromises during the job search and employment processes. Immediate career achievement became less important than it used to be, and family roles, such as supporting their family, and personal goals such as took on more importance. During this period, some reported experiencing deskilling of their existing qualifications and a loss of self-confidence and professional optimism. In the final outcome, some women were able to re-establish themselves in a similar profession, although at a lower level than they were in Sri Lanka. Others eventually became established in a different profession. Yet another group was working in jobs that they perceived as stepping stones to another occupation or self-employment. Within the re-storying of career identity, a process of compromise and circumscription of career choices occurred. The choices were based partly on available job opportunities, educational options, and job status. This resembles career decision-making processes in Gottfredson's theory of career compromise and circumscription (Gottfredson, 1981, 2002). However, unlike in Gottfredson's theory, career choice was not affected by gender stereotypes. Over time, participants' stories of career identity intermingled and they developed dual career identities, identifying with the Sri Lankan one at certain times in their life and with the Canadian one at other times. Though the early and current phases of their career history were incongruent, their experiences with and understanding of the external nature of the obstacles to their career progress and the limited choices that were available enabled them to create a unified life history that spanned their disparate career development experiences.

An implication for theory as well as for practice, is applying the lens of adaptability to understanding how immigrants and others who undergo career transitions maintain or transform their career identity. The concept of career adaptability has been shown to be helpful to successfully undergo career transitions (Isaacson & Brown, 1993; Pratzner & Ashley, 1984; Super & Knasel, 1979). Similar concepts of personal flexibility (Herr, 1992) and career resilience (Goodman, 1994) have also been put forward and are worthy of being studied and promoted during periods of career transition.

Implications for clinical practice. This study has several important implications for multicultural counselling, career counselling, mental health provision and counsellor training. In light of increasing multiculturalism in North America, psychologists and career counsellors are focusing on increasing their knowledge and skills in culturally competent practice (Fouad, 2004). The knowledge gained from this study increases psychologists' and counsellors' awareness of career identity development of Sri Lankan immigrant women and the importance of career to this population. Furthermore, the results of this study inform mental health professionals and employment professionals about the importance of attending to employment issues when providing culturally-sensitive treatment. It also educates mental health professionals about the emotional, cognitive and social tensions that accompany the process of change to career identity. In addition, it provides support to the notion that resettlement is a lifelong process and that employment and career identity needs change throughout this process (Beiser & Hou, 2001). One of the important findings for career

counsellors and mental health professionals is the centrality of career for this group of immigrant women. Participants had a clear vision of their preferred profession fairly early in their educational path and held to a career trajectory throughout their employment in Sri Lanka. Immigration forces a process of career identity change that is typically marked by emotionally painful events and which is a struggle that may prolong over a period of several years.

Immigrant unemployment is a national concern which is addressed via programs, services and policies related to immigrant employment. Understanding the evolution of the career identity of immigrants is necessary to providing appropriately-timed and culturally-sensitive vocational counselling and employment services to immigrants. Identifying the stage of career identity evolution at which a Sri Lankan immigrant woman currently is can be very helpful to successful re-employment processes. The skilled employment agent and mental health professional will be attuned to the immigrants' level of awareness of the obstacles to their career progression, test the immigrants' level of willingness to modify the scope of their career options, and increase the immigrants' openness to a new career identity.

The results of this study alert mental health professionals to important areas that need to be explored during the therapeutic process, such as discrimination experiences, current professional achievement and satisfaction compared to former career, cultural and societal career expectations, class of immigration (i.e., refugee, sponsored), stage of resettlement (e.g., refugee status

or landed immigrant status), financial role within family and changes to this role, social support network and presence of community support.

Another set of implications for practice is derived from the finding that employment plays a role in increasing immigrants' sense of belonging in the host country. Being a native with generations of family history in a country may help create a sense of belonging which also provides a feeling of security. For immigrants from a visible ethnic minority, being of different ethnic composition, having different visible physiological features (e.g., skin colour, facial features), holding different values and norms and systems, and not being a legal resident until granted residency, all contribute to the feeling of being the "outsider". Approval in social, economic and cultural aspects of Canadian life can contribute to one's feeling accepted and the sense of belonging. Acceptance and belonging can be experienced when passing from landed immigrant status, to permanent resident and to citizen. Also, approval can be perceived by being hired and accepted into an occupation and a team or organization. This feeling of approval, acknowledgement, and acceptance can help immigrants feel they belong in their new country and society. The easiest way to engage in daily contact with other members of society is through employment and the women in this population were eager to do so. Those who were in the workforce found employment was a means to acculturate to the Canadian values and system. Thus, employment has multiple benefits for immigrants, both for psychological well-being and for successful integration into the norms and system in Quebec.

Implications for policy. The findings of this study have multiple implications for immigration and employment policy. The results of this study can help enact changes that improve service provision in employment-training and employment-assistance programs for immigrant women. For example, raising awareness about the role of employment for Sri Lankan immigrant women's resettlement is one of the implications for immigration policy. There can be more appropriate attention to support career development of Sri Lankan immigrant woman post-migration given the relevance of career to their identity. Immigration agents need to be trained about the significance of a fulfilling career for the psychological and emotional well-being of these women.

Another important implication is the necessity for improved language training. If the job market and employers require French fluency, then it seems necessary to improve language teaching methods. One difficulty participants cited was the immersion format of language teaching. One method of improving language learning for Anglophone students may be considering different models for French second language pedagogy for educated adult immigrants beside the immersion-style Communicative Language Teaching presently in use.

Participants' age, discrimination at job interviews, and future job availability are perceived as obstacles to career development and are realistic concerns. Providing vocational counselling with a counselling psychologist to cope with career change, to determine potential career options and to orient towards options that could yield the most career satisfaction could vastly improve Sri Lankan immigrant women's career satisfaction and overall well-being. The

optimal timing of these sessions could be during and after completion of immigration procedures when they are reflecting on and commencing job searches. To further improve their career outcomes, latter residency procedures could include dissemination of information about childcare options. This study indicates that it was difficult for new immigrant mothers to leave their children alone at home and seek work, as they didn't have extended family members living with them to care for the children. None of the participants seemed aware of daycare services, however, and because getting a space in a subsidized daycare can take months or years, they are likely to have been left with private daycare choices which are too expensive on their limited income.

As a result of their experiences, participants recommended others migrate with all career training previously attained. However, this is not necessarily the best solution, because often those qualifications are likely to not be recognized by the licensing and educational boards in Quebec. In addition, certain training needs periodic upgrading, which can make retraining in Quebec mandatory. Therefore, because language learning and obtaining Quebec educational qualifications is necessary, it is important to relay this information to immigrants through Citizenship and Immigration Canada's websites and at Canadian embassies worldwide.

Economic aspects also hinder re-training and policy changes could help. For immigrants, balancing career development with personal and family lives sometimes necessitated taking a break from their career development to focus on their children. During such periods, some participants attempted to maintain

professional development but faced the new obstacle of having to pay for education, which was provided free of charge in Sri Lanka. Therefore, financial assistance for re-training as well as childcare for the duration of re-training would be a significant improvement. There is also need for wider dissemination of information about sources of funding for education and about programs of study that are free or at low cost for immigrants. Providing funding for retraining and social assistance for the family during training of immigrant mothers will be very beneficial for career-oriented immigrant women. This can improve first-generation immigrants' integration into the fabric of Quebec and Canadian society, improve the psychological well-being of mothers and children's standard of life, and increase the retention rates of immigrants in Quebec.

One of the changes to be implemented more widely is correcting the portrait that immigrants have of ease of employment after immigrating to Quebec. For most participants of this study, migrating from Sri Lanka, where the economy and job opportunities were impoverished due to the effects of the civil war, to Canada, where the economy and standard of living are better, was accompanied by expectations for good employment. This also stimulated job search activity among the participants. However, at this time the employment barriers in Quebec were experienced and engendered disappointment and career-related regret. While Immigration Quebec's website reflects the fact that there will be some challenges, only the language barrier is explicitly stated. It would be helpful to provide more information on the website regarding the extent of employment

challenges, as this could mitigate career-oriented immigrants' disappointments and may instigate earlier action to re-orient career.

The statistics show that many Sri Lankans who immigrate to Quebec later move to English Quebec. The largest concentration of Sri Lankans in Canada is in Toronto and one participant in the study had moved to Ottawa and Toronto to pursue the profession she held in Sri Lanka. A policy change that would be very helpful for English-speaking allophone immigrants is creating financial incentives for employers to hire immigrants who are learning French and retrained in Quebec institutions on short-term contracts. This will provide immigrants with Quebec work experience, access to preferred occupations, learning about the mechanism of applying for these positions in the future, and opportunities to prove their skills and be re-hired after the end of contract. Employer incentives combined with financial assistance for education are likely to make these immigrant women feel they are making some career progress, making it less likely for them to consider moving to other provinces. An employment-related policy change such as increasing employer awareness of the need for feedback mechanisms, especially positive feedback, with immigrant workers can also greatly improve immigrant workers' pride and satisfaction with their occupations. In addition, changing employer attitudes that immigrant women's work is secondary to that of their spouses may affect the ratio of women being laid off from work.

Participants also reported racism and ageism as the two most common prejudices they experienced. This was a distressing situation for these Sri Lankan

Sinhalese women who were part of a privileged ethnic group in Sri Lanka and were less experienced with unfavorable treatment on the basis of their ethnicity. They were unprepared for racism and its impact on their career-seeking efforts. Since discrimination affects everyone, advocating against racism and ageism in the workplace and in society would benefit many individuals beyond the population in this study.

Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations similar to other studies of qualitative nature. As a narrative study, it has certain limitations for generalizability of results. Therefore, as the study is designed to obtain a picture of the career identity of Sri Lankan immigrant women of a given cohort, the results cannot be fully applied to other groups of Sri Lankan immigrant women although some generalizability may be expected. The primary data collection method used for this study was interviewing. Relying on only one type of data collection method runs the risk of being over-reliant on limited types of data, which in turn influences the final interpretations and conclusions of this study. Similarly, the data were gathered by one researcher, thus it is likely that the participants co-constructed the narrative of their career identity in a way that they would not have with another researcher. If another researcher had assisted with the interviews, data of a different nature would have been collected. For example, it is possible that participants felt pride and hope from interacting with a fellow Sri Lankan Canadian who was successfully working towards occupational goals, or it is possible that participants may have felt more dissatisfied with their careers in light

of being interviewed by someone who was experiencing fewer occupational barriers. If participants self-selected for the study, the criterion on which they did so is not apparent as they displayed a range on all of the criteria explored in the study. While relying on autobiographical memory may seem to be a weakness of this research, any errors in remembering do not undermine the value of the memories; in fact, they emphasize the importance of the interpretive meaning of the memory.

Contribution to Knowledge

This study adds to literature in multicultural counselling by providing a rich and contextualized portrait of Sri Lankan Sinhalese immigrant women's experiences of career development in Quebec. It provides a window into the career needs and goals of a specific subgroup of South Asian immigrant women, and directions that are useful for professionals doing vocational counselling or psychotherapy with women of this or similar subgroups. Additionally, this study focuses on a group of immigrant women with education and work experience, which generates a set of unique needs for employment as part of resettlement.

By providing a portrait of the career development processes of a subgroup of South Asian immigrant women, it fills a gap in career literature. In addition, this study illustrates multiple forms of discrimination (i.e., racism, sexism, and ageism) that are encountered by immigrant women during employment processes and the impact thereof on immigrant women's career decisions. The contextualization sought in this study allows career decision-making and re-

orientation to be understood in the larger socio-cultural and economic contexts of an immigrant woman's resettlement in a host society.

This study also contributes to the feminist literature in three ways. It enables the emergence of data-driven knowledge, allowing the voices of the participants from an underrepresented group to be acknowledged, heard, and validated. By focusing on the experiences of women uniquely, this study values the experiences of women and the need for research data on their unique experience of the world. By examining women's relationship towards their career and its development, this study revealed the importance of paid employment in a profession of their choice for these women. It provides support for equal opportunity policies in the workforce as well as support for valuing women's employment because of its significance for the women's and their families' well-being. Finally, by giving them voice, this study empowers these women as well as contributes to a knowledge base of research data. Furthermore, the high level of contextualization enables the reader to see the interplay between the various hindering factors, for example discrimination, and the career directions taken by these women. It enables to externalize responsibility for women's inability to continue their career development trajectory by situating their efforts in the context of the social and systemic barriers.

Conclusion

This study brought to light employment and career development of a subgroup of South Asian immigrant women. The impact of immigration and its disruptive effect on these women's career trajectory was explored, as were the

effects on psychological well-being, familial and social roles, and independence. The findings of this study highlight a great need for psychologists, social workers, and employment agents to be aware of the psychological implications of unemployment and underemployment for these women, and to assist the career progress of this population. In addition, this study provides a starting point for future research on this population. Given the significance of skilled immigrants to the Quebec economy and the necessity of well-established immigrants in Quebec society, re-envisioned immigration and job market integration procedures can be provide better assistance to qualified and experienced immigrant women who wish to find their place in the labour market and be satisfied and proud members of Quebec and Canadian society.

Bibliography

Abrahams, C., & Steven, L. (1990). Self-perceived success of adjustment by Sri Lankan immigrants in metropolitan Toronto: A preliminary report. *Polyphony,12*, 30-34.

Ahooja-Patel, K. (1986). Employment of women in Sri Lanka: The situation in Colombo. In R. Anker & C. Hein (Eds.), *Sex inequalities in urban employment in the third world* (pp. 213-233). Geneva, Switzerland: The International Labor Office.

Ajzen, I. (1985). From intentions to actions: A theory of planned behaviour. In J. Kuhl & J. Beckman (Eds.), *Action-control: From cognition to behaviour* (pp. 11-39). Heidelberg, Germany: Springer.

Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior & Human Decision Processes, 50*, 179-211.

Alasuutari, P. (1995). *Researching culture: Qualitative method and cultural studies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Allison, C. J., & Cossette, M. (2007). *Three theories of career development and choice*. Proven Practices for Recruiting Women to STEM Careers in ATE programs, Edmonds Community College, National Science Foundation funded Advanced Technological Program project. Retrieved from http://www.stemrecruiting.org/docs/pub/3theories.pdf

Angel, R., & Tienda, M. (1982). Determinants of extended household structure: Cultural pattern or economic need? *American Journal of Sociology, 87*(6), 1360-1383.

Arbona, C. (1996). Career theory and practice in a multicultural context. In M. L. Savickas & W. B. Walsh (Eds.), *Handbook of career counselling theory and practice* (pp. 45-54). Palo Alto, CA: Davies-Black.

Armstrong, P. I., & Crombie, G. (2000). Compromises in adolescents' occupational aspirations and expectations from grades 8 to 10. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 56,* 82-98.

Aronson, R. (1991). *Self-employment: A labor market approach*. Ithaca, NY: ILR Press.

Ashford, L., Clifton, D., Kaneda, T. (2006). *The world's youth: 2006 Data sheet*. Population Reference Bureau. Retrieved from http://www.prb.org/pdf06/WorldsYouth2006DataSheet.pdf

Ashford, L., & Clifton, D. (2005). *Women of our world: 2005*. Population Reference Bureau. Retrieved from http://www.prb.org/Source/ACF199B.pdf

Ashforth, B., & Kreiner, G. (1999). How can you do it? Dirty work and the challenge of constructing a positive identity. *Academy of Management Review, 18*(1), 88-115.

Attanapola, C. T. (2004). Changing gender roles and health impacts among female workers in export-processing industries in Sri Lanka. *Social Science and Medicine, 58,* 2301-2312.

Aturapane, H. (2010). Sri Lanka higher education for the twenty first century project. World Bank Project. Retrieved from http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2010/04/27/000333038_20100427004751/Rendered/PDF/491900PAD0P113101Official0Use0Only1.pdf

Aturupane, H., & Millot, B., Wang, L., Allak, M., Chandrasiri, S., Fielden, J., Mikhail, S., Laroque, N., Rowlinson, R., & Sonnadara, U. (2009). *The towers of learning: Performance, peril and promise of higher education in Sri Lanka*. The World Bank, Human Development Unit, South Asia Region, July 2009.

Ayduk, O., Gyurak, A., & Luerssen, A. (2009). Rejection sensitivity moderates the impact of rejection on self-concept clarity. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 35*, 1467-1478.

Badets, J., & Howatson-Leo, D. (1999). Recent immigrants in the workforce. *Canadian Social Trends, 52,* 16-22.

Baker, T., & Aldrich, H. E. (1996). Prometheus stretches: Building identity and cumulative knowledge in multiemployer careers. In M. B. Arthur & D. M. Rousseau (Eds.), *The boundaryless career* (pp. 132-149). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Bandura, A. (1982). A self-efficacy mechanism in human agency. *American Psychologist, 37*, 122-147.

Barnum, P., Liden, R. C., & Ditomaso, N. (1995). Double jeopardy for women and minorities: Pay differences with age. *Academy of Management Journal, 38*(3), 863-880.

Basavarajappa, K. G., & Verma, R. B. P. (1985). Asian immigrants in Canada: Some findings from the 1981 Census. *International Migration, 23*(1), 97-121.

Bates, T. (1994). Social resources generated by group support networks may not be beneficial to Asian immigrant-owned small business. *Social Forces, 72*(3), 671-689.

Bauer, M. (1996). The narrative interview: Comments on a method for qualitative data collection. *Papers in Social Research Methods,* Qualitative Series 1. London: London School of Economics and Political Science Methodology Institute.

Baumeister, R. F. (1991). *Meanings of life.* New York: Guilford.

Baumeister, R. F. (1994). The crystallization of discontent in the process of major life change. In T. Heatherton & J. Weinberger (Eds.), *Can personality change?* (pp. 281-297). Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.

Beale, F. (1970). Double jeopardy: To be black and female. In T. Cade (Ed.), *The black woman: An anthology* (pp. 90–10). New York, NY: New American Library.

Bean, F., Leach, M., & Lowell, B. L. (2004). Immigrant job quality and mobility in the United States. *Work and Occupations, 31*(4), 499-518.

Beiser, M. (1999). *Strangers at the gate: The 'boat people's' first ten years in Canada*. Toronto, ON, Canada: University of Toronto Press.

Beiser, M., Gill, K., & Edwards, R. G. (1993). Mental health care in Canada: Is it accessible and equal? *Canada's Mental Health, 41*, 2-7.

Beiser, M., & Hou, F. (2001). Language acquisition, unemployment and depressive disorder among Southeast Asian refugees: A 10-year study. *Social Science and Medicine, 53,* 1321-1334.

Berdahl, J. L., & Moore, C. (2006). Workplace harassment: Double jeopardy for minority women. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 91*(2), 426-436.

Berry, J. W. (2001). A psychology of immigration. *Journal of Social Issues, 57*(3), 615-631.

Betz, N. E., & Fitzgerald, L. F. (1996). Career assessment and intervention with racial and ethnic minorities. In S. Leong & F. Leong (Eds.), *Career development and vocational behavior of racial and ethnic minorities* (pp. 263-280). Toronto, ON, Canada: Routledge.

Bhattacharya, G. (2008). Acculturating Indian immigrant men in New York city: Applying the social capital construct to understand their experiences and health. *Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health, 10*(2), 91-101.

Blau, G. (2000). Job, organizational and professional context antecedents as predictors of intent for interrole work transitions. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 56*(3), 330-345.

Blau, G. (2003). Testing for a four-dimensional structure of occupational commitment. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, 76,* 469-488.

Blau, G., & Beller, A. H. (1988). Trends in earnings differentials by gender, 1971-1981. *Industrial & Labor Relations Review, 41*(4), 513-530.

Blau, G., & Lunz, M. (1998). Testing the incremental effect of professional commitment on intent to leave one's profession beyond the effects of external, personal and work-related variables. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 52*(2), 260-269.

Blau, G., Surges Tatum, D., & Ward-Cook, K. (2003). Correlates of professional versus organizational withdrawal cognitions. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 63*(1), 72-85.

Bluck, S. (2003). Autobiographical memory: Exploring its functions in everyday life. *Memory, 11*(2), 113-123.

Bluck, S., & Habermas, T. (2000). The life story schema. *Motivation and Emotion, 24*(2), 121-147.

Blustein, D. L. (2006). *The psychology of working: A new perspective for career development, counseling, and public policy.* Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Blustein, D. L. (2008). The role of work in psychological health and well-being: A conceptual, historical, and public policy perspective. *American Psychologist, 63*(4), 228-240.

Bonanno, G. A. (2004). Loss, trauma, and human resilience: Have we underestimated the human capacity to thrive after extremely aversive events? *American Psychologist, 59,* 20-28.

Borgen, W. A., & Amundson, N. E. (1985). Counselling immigrants for employment. In R. J. Samuda & A. Wolfgang (Eds.), *International counselling and assessment: Global perspectives* (pp. 269-272). Toronto, ON: Hogrefe.

Bouchard, G., & Taylor, C. (2008) *Building the future: A time for reconciliation*. Retrieved from http://www.accommodements.qc.ca/index-en.html.

Boudarbat, B., & Boulet, B. (2010*). Immigration au Québec: Politiques et intégration au marché du travail*. Montreal, QC, Canada: CIRANO.

Bourdieu, P. (1986) The forms of capital. In J. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education* (pp. 241-259). New York, NY: Greenwood.

Boyd, M. (1987). Migrant women in Canada: Profiles and policies. Report submitted to the subpanel on Migrant Women, OECD-Paris. Ottawa, ON, Canada: Employment and Immigration, Public Affairs Inquiries and Distribution.

Brans, J. (1989). *Take two: True stories of real people who dared to change their lives*. New York, NY: Doubleday.

Brenner, H. (1995). Political economy and health. In B. C. Amick, S. Levine, A. R. Tarlov, & D. C. Walsh (Eds.), *Society and health* (pp. 211–246). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Brown, D. (2000). Theory and the school-to-work transition: Are the recommendations suitable for cultural minorities? *The Career Development Quarterly, 48,* 370-375.

Brown, D., Brooks, L., & Associates. (1996). *Career choice and development: Applying contemporary theories to practice.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Bruner, J. (1986). *Actual minds, possible worlds*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bruner, J. (1990). *Acts of meaning*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.Byars, A. M., & McCubbin, L. D. (2001). Trends in career development research with racial/ethnic minorities. In J. G. Ponterotto, J. M. Casas, L. A. Suzuki & C. M. Alexander (Eds.), *Handbook of multicultural counseling* (pp. 633-654). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Byrne, B. (1984). The general/academic self-concept nomological network: A review of construct validation research. *Review of Educational Research, 54*, 427-456.

Canadian Task Force on Mental Health Issues Affecting Immigrants and Refugees. (1988). *Review of the literature on migrant mental health*. Ottawa, ON, Canada: Ministry of Supply and Service.

Carlson, L. A., & Swartz, C. (1988). The earnings of women and ethnic minorities, 1959-1979. *Industrial and Labor Relations Review, 41*(4), 530-546.

Carter, B., & McGoldrick, M. (2003) The family life cycle. In F. Walsh (Ed.), *Normal Family Processes: Growing Diversity and Complexity* (pp. 375-398*)* NY: Guilford Press.

Carter, R. T., & Cook, D. A. (1992). A culturally relevant perspective for understanding the career paths of visible racial/ethnic group people. In H. D. Lea & Z. B. Leibowitz (Eds.), *Adult career development: Concepts, issues, and practice* (pp. 192-217). Alexandria, VA: National Career Development Association.

Caska, B. A. (2006). The search for employment: Motivation to engage in a coping behavior. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 28*(3), 206-224.

Castelino, P. (2004). Factors influencing career choices of South Asian Americans: A path analysis. *Dissertation Abstracts International: Section A: Humanities and Social Sciences, 65(8-A),* 2906.

Caulkins, D. D. & Peters, C. (2002). Grid-group analysis, social capital, and entrepreneurship among North American ethnic groups. *Cross-Cultural Research, 36*(1), 48-72.

Central Bank of Sri Lanka (1990). *Socio-Economic achievements of Sri Lanka*. Colombo, Sri Lanka: Central Bank of Sri Lanka, Statistics Department.

Central Bank of Sri Lanka (2000). *Annual report of the monetary board to the honorable Minister of Finance*. Colombo, Sri Lanka: Central Bank of Sri Lanka, Statistics Department.

Chavira-Prado, A. (1992). Work, health, and the family: Gender structure and women's status in an undocumented migrant population. *Human Organization, 51*(1), 53-64.

Cheatham, H. E. (1990). Africentricity and career development of African Americans. *The Career Development Quarterly, 38,* 334-346.

Chen, C. P. (2008). Career guidance with immigrants. In J. Athanasou & R. V. Esbroeck (Eds.), *International handbook of career guidance* (pp. 419-442). New York: Springer.

Chiswick, B. R., Cohen, Y., & Zach, T. (1997). The labor market status of immigrants: Effects of the unemployment rate at arrival and duration of residence. *Industrial and Labor Relations Review, 50*(2), 289-303.

Chung, Y. B., Loeb, J. W., & Gonzo, S. T. (1996). Factors predicting the educational and career aspirations of black college freshmen. *Journal of Career Development, 23*, 127-135.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada. (2001). Pursuing Canada's commitment to immigration: The immigration plan for 2002. Retrieved from http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/publications/anrep02.asp

Citizenship and Immigration Canada. (2002). *Statistical overview of the temporary resident and refugee claimant population.* Retrieved from http://prod.library.utoronto.ca/datalib/data/utm/cic/facts-temp2002.pdf

Citizenship and Immigration Canada. (2005). *Recent immigrants in metropolitan areas – A comparative profile based on the 2001 census*. Retrieved from http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/research/census2001/canada/intro.asp

Citizenship and Immigration Canada. (2005a). *Facts and figures: Immigration overview, permanent and temporary citizens*. Retrieved from http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/pub/facts2004/index.html

Citizenship and Immigration Canada. (2005b). *Research plans and reports*. Retrieved from http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/research/papers/index.html

Citizenship and Immigration Canada. (2009). *Report on the review of the designation of the United States as a Safe Third Country*. Retrieved from http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/publications/safe-third.asp

Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (1988). Studying teachers' knowledge of classrooms: Collaborative research, ethics, and the negotiation of narrative. *The Journal of Educational Thought, 22*(2A), 269-282.

Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (2000). *Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Cole, E., Espin, O., & Rothblum, E. (1992). *Refugee women and their mental health: Shattered societies, shattered lives*. New York, NY: Haworth.

Collin, A., & Young, R. A. (1986). New directions for theories of career. *Human Relations, 39*(9), 837-853.

Conger, R. D., Conger, K. J., Elder, G. H., Jr., Lorenz, F. O., Simons, R. L., & Whitbeck, L. B. (1992). A family process model of economic hardship and adjustment of early adolescent boys. *Child Development, 63*, 526-541.

Conway, M. A. (1990). *Autobiographical memory: An introduction*. Milton Keynes, UK: Open University Press.

Conway, M. A., & Pleydell-Pearce, C. W. (2000). The construction of autobiographical memories in the self-memory system. *Psychological Review, 107*(2), 261-288.

Cook, E. P., Heppner, M. J., & O'Brien, K. M. (2005). Multicultural and gender influences in women's career development: An ecological perspective. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*, *33*,165-179

Corlett, E. S., & Millner, N. B. (1993). *Navigating midlife: Using typology as a guide.* Palo Alto, CA: CPP Books.

Cortazzi, M. (1993). *Narrative analysis.* London, UK: Falmer.

Cotton, J., & Tuttle, J. (1986). Employee turnover: A meta-analysis and review with implications for research. *Academy of Management Review, 11,* 55–70.

Creswell, J. W., Hanson, W. E., Plano Clark, V. L., & Morales, A. (2007). Qualitative research designs: Selection and implementation. *The Counseling Psychologist, 35*(2), 236-264.

Creswell, J. W., & Miller, D. L. (2000). Determining validity in qualitative inquiry. *Theory Into Practice, 39,* 124-130.

Danielewicz, J. (2001). *Teaching selves: Identity, pedagogy, and teacher education.* Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Darvishpour, M. (2002). Immigrant women challenge the role of men: How the changing power relationship within Iranian families in Sweden intensifies family conflicts after immigration. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies, 33*(2), 271-296.

Davey, F. H., & Stoppard, J. M. (1993). Some factors affecting the occupational expectations of female adolescents. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 43,* 235-250.

Dawis, R. V., & Lofquist, L. H. (1984). *A psychological theory of work adjustment.* Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

DeFillippi, R. J., & Arthur, M. B. (1994). The boundaryless career: A competency-based perspective, *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 15,* 307-324.

DeFillippi, R. J., & Arthur, M. B. (1996). Boundaryless contexts and careers: A competency-based perspective. In M. B. Arthur & D. M. Rousseau (Eds.), *The boundaryless career* (pp. 116-131). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Department of Census and Statistics. (1998). *Statistical profile of Sri Lanka*. Colombo, Sri Lanka: Department of Census and Statistics and Ministry of Finance and Planning.

Department of Census and Statistics. (2001). *Sri Lanka demographic and health survey 2000*. Colombo, Sri Lanka: Department of Census and Statistics and Ministry of Finance and Planning.

Department of Census and Statistics. (2005). Bulletin of labour force statistics of Sri Lanka – August 2005. Retrieved from www.statistics.gov.lk

Department of Census and Statistics. (2001b). *Number and percentage of population by district and ethnic group.* Colombo, Sri Lanka: Department of Census and Statistics and Ministry of Finance and Planning.

Deschamps, G. (1985). *Étude longitudinale sur l'adaptation socio-économique des réfugiés indochinois au Québec : La deuxième année de séjour*. Montreal, QC, Canada: Ministère des Communautés Culturelles et de l'Immigration, Cahier no. 3.

De Silva, W. I. (1993). Family formation: Sociocultural differentials in age at first marriage in Sri Lanka. *Journal of Family Welfare, 39*(3), 55-60.

De Silva, W. I. (2008). *Demographic and social trends affecting families in the South and Central Asian region*. United Nations Division for Social Policy

and Development. Retrieved from http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/family/Publications/mtrendsbg.htm

Dewey, J. (1929). *The quest for certainty: A study of the relation of knowledge and action.* New York, NY: Paragon Books.

Dion, K. K., & Dion, K. L. (2001). Gender and cultural adaptation in immigrant families. *Journal of Social Issues, 57*(3), 511-521.

Dominguez, J. M., & Hombrados, M. I. (2006). Employment characteristics of immigrant women. *Revista de Psicologia Social Aplicada, 16*(1-2), 181-191.

Donkin, R. (2001). *Blood, sweat, & tears: The evolution of work*. New York, NY: Texere.

Dorais, L.-J. (1989). Intégration et adaptation dans une ville de taille moyenne : Les réfugiés d'Asie du Sud-Est à Québec. *Revue Internationale d'Action Communautaire*, *21*(61), 177-184.

Dorais, L.-J., Pilon-Lê, L., Quy Bong, N., Huy, N., & Kaley, R. (1984). *Les Vietnamiens du Québec.* Montreal, QC, Canada: Centre International de Recherche sur le Bilinguisme.

Dunkel, C. S., & Sefcek, J. A. (2009). Eriksonian lifespan theory and life history theory: An integration using the example of identity formation. *Review of General Psychology, 13*(1), 13-23.

Ebaugh, H. R. F. (1977). *Out of the cloister*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

Ebaugh, H. R. F. (1988). *Becoming an ex: The process of role exit*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Ehrenreich, B., & Hochschild, A. R. (2003). *Global woman: Nannies, maids and sex workers in the new economy*. London, UK: Granta.

Enchautegui, M. E. (2002). Household members and employment outcomes of recent immigrants: A network approach. *Social Science Quarterly, 83*(2), 594-611.

Enos, A. D. (2001). A landscape with multiple views: Research in Pueblo communities. In B. M. Merchant & A. I. Willis (Eds.), *Multiple and intersecting identities in qualitative research* (pp. 83-102). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Erikson, E. H. (1968). *Identity: Youth and Crisis.* New York: W. W. Norton.

Esses, V. M., Dietz, J., & Bhardwaj, A. (2006). The role of prejudice in the discounting of immigrant skills. In Mahalingam, R. (Eds), *The Cultural Psychology of Immigrants*, (pp.113-130). Erlbaum, Mahwah, NJ.

Espiritu, Y. L. (1999). Gender and labour in Asian immigrant families. *American Behavioral Scientist, 42*(4), 628-647.

Eyre, A., Jayawickrama, J. S., Guneratne, S., & Samithadasa, R. (2001). *Survey on safety and health conditions of free trade zone women workers in Sri Lanka*. Colombo, Sri Lanka: American Solidarity Center.

Fitzgerald, L. F., & Betz, N. E. (1994). Career development in cultural context: The role of gender, race, class, and sexual orientation. In M. L. Savickas & R.W. Lent (Eds.), *Convergence in Career Development Theories,* (pp. 103-117). Palo Alto, CA: CPP Books.

Flick, U. (2002). *An introduction to qualitative research.* London, UK: Sage.

Fouad, N. A., McPherson, R. H., Gerstein, L., Blustein, D. L., Elman, N., Helledy, K. I., & Metz, A. J. (2004). Houston, 2001: Context and legacy. *The Counseling Psychology, 32*(1), 15-77.

Fouad, N. A., & Bynner, J. (2008). Work transitions. *American Psychologist, 63*(4), 241-251.

Friedman, R. A., & Krackhardt, D. (1997). Social capital and career mobility. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 33*(3), 316-334.

Furlong, A., & Biggart, A. (1999). Framing 'choices': A longitudinal study of occupational aspirations among 13 to 16 year olds. *Journal of Education and Work, 12,* 21-35.

Gall, M. D., Borg, W. R., & Gall, J. P. (1996). *Educational research: An introduction*. White Plains, NY: Longman Publisher.

Gall, M. D., Gall, J. P., & Borg, W. R. (2007). *Educational research*. Boston, MA: Pearson.

Girard, M. (2002), La précarité de l'emploi chez les nouveaux immigrants : une relation non linéaire entre stabilité et qualité, Master's thesis, Department of sociology, Université de Montréal, June, 93 pages.

Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1971). *Status passage*. London, UK: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Godin, J-F. (2004). *L'insertion en emploi des travailleurs admis au Québec en vertu de la grille de sélection de 1996*. Partie 1, rapport synthèse: Quebec, QC, Canada: Ministry of Immigration and Cultural Affairs.

Godin, J-F., & Renaud, J. (2002). The impact of non-governmental organizations and language skills on the employability of refugee claimants: Evidence from Québec. *Canadian Ethnic Studies, 34*(1), 112-137.

Godin, J-F., & Renaud, J. (2005). Work and immigrants: An analysis of employment activity in the first ten years of establishment in the Montreal area. *Journal of International Migration and Integration,6*(3), 469-492.

Goodman, E. (1979). Turning points: How people change through crisis and commitment. Garden City, NJ: Doubleday Books.

Goodman, J. (1994). Career adaptability in adults: A construct whose time has come. *The Career Development Quarterly, 43*(1), 74-84.

Gore, S., & Mangione, T. W. (1983). Social roles, sex roles and psychological distress: Additive and interactive models of sex differences. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior, 24*(4), 300-312.

Gottfredson, L. S. (1981). Circumscription and compromise: A developmental theory of occupational aspirations. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 28* (6), 545-579.

Gottfredson, L. S. (2002). Gottfredson's theory of circumscription, compromise and self-creation. In D. Brown & Associates (Eds.), *Career choice and development* (pp. 85-148). San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.

Guba, E. G. (1981). Criteria for assessing the trustworthiness of naturalistic inquiries. *Educational Communications and Technology Journal 29*, 75-92.

Hackett, G., & Lent, R. W. (1992). Theoretical advances and current inquiry in counseling psychology. In S. D. Brown & R. W. Lent, Jr. (Eds.), *Handbook of counseling psychology* (pp. 419-452). New York, NY: Wiley.

Hall, C., & Norby, J. (1973). *A primer of Jungian psychology.* New York, NY: Taplinger.

Hall, D. T. (1971). A theoretical model of career subidentity development in organizational settings. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance, 6,* 50-76.

Hall, D. T. (2002). *Careers in and out of organizations*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Hao, L., & Kawano, Y. (2001). Immigrants' welfare use and opportunity for contact with co-ethnics. *Demography, 38,* 375-389.

Heatherton, T. F., & Nichols, P. A. (1994). Personal accounts of successful versus failed attempts and life change. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 20,* 664-675.

Herr, E. L. (1992). Counseling for personal flexibility in a global economy. *Educational and Vocational Guidance, 53,* 5-16.

Herr, E. L. (1997). Career counseling: A process in a process. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling, 25*(1), 81-93.

Herr, E. L., & Cramer, S. H. (1996). *Career guidance and counselling through the life span: Systemic approaches.* New York, NY: Harper Collins.

Hettige, S. T. (1997). Social cost of migration. Paper presented at International Conference on Migrant Women Workers, October 7-9, 1997, Colombo, Sri Lanka.

Ho S. M. Y., Chan, C. L. W., & Ho, R. T. H. (2004). Post-traumatic growth in Chinese cancer survivors. *Psychooncology 13*, 377–89.

Hochschild, A. (1989). *The second shift*. New York, NY: Viking.

Hochschild, A. R., & Machung, A. (1989). *The second shift: Working parents and the revolution at home*. New York, NY: Viking.

Holland, J. L. (1958). A personality inventory employing occupational titles. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 42,* 336–342.

Holland, J. L. (1985). *Making vocational choices: A theory of vocational personalities and work environments.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Holland, J. L. (1997). *Making vocational choices: A theory of vocational personalities and work environments*. Odessa, FL: Psychological Assessment Resources.

Holland, J. L., Gottfredson, L. S., & Baker, H. G. (1990). Validity of vocational aspirations and interest inventories: Extended, replicated, and reinterpreted. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 37*, 337-342.

Hoshmand, L. L. S. T. (1989). Alternate research paradigms: A review and teaching proposal. *The Counseling Psychologist, 17,* 1-80.

Howenstine, R. A., Silberstein, L. R., Newton, D. S., & Newton, P. B. (1992). Life structure revitalization: An adult development approach to psychodynamic psychotherapy. *Psychiatry, 55,* 194-206.

Hoyt, W. T., Warbasse, R. E., & Chu, E. Y. (2006). Construct validation in counselling psychology research. *The Counseling Psychologist, 34,* 769-805.

Hugo, G. (1994a). Introduction. In M. Wooden, R. Holton, G. Hugo, & J. Sloan (Eds.), *Australian immigration: A survey of the issues* (pp. 1-29). Canberra, Australia: AGPS.

Hugo, G. (1994b). Demographic and spatial aspects of immigration. In M. Wooden, R. Holton, G. Hugo & J. Sloan (Eds.), *Australian immigration: A survey of the issues* (pp. 30-110). Canberra, Australia: AGPS.

Hyndman, J. (2003). Aid, conflict and migration: The Canada-Sri Lanka connection. *The Canadian Geographer, 47*(3), 251-268.

Ibarra, H. (1999). Provisional selves: Experimenting with image and identity in professional adaptation. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 44*(4), 764-791.

Ibarra, H., Kilduff, M., & Tsai, W. (2005). Zooming in and out: Connecting individuals and collectivities at the frontiers of organizational network research. *Organization Science, 16,* 359-371.

Institut de la Statistique du Québec. (2005). Données sociodémographiques en bref. June 1, 2005. Quebec: Information and Documentation Centre (ISQ)

Ip, D. (1993). Reluctant entrepreneurs: Professionally qualified Asian migrants in small business. *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal, 2*(1), 57-70.

Iredale, R. (2004). Gender, immigration policies and accreditation: Valuing the skills of professional women migrants. *Geoforum, 36*(2), 155-166.

Isaacson, L. E., & Brown, D. (1993). *Career information, career counseling, and career development* (5th ed.) Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Iyengar, S. (1991). *Is anyone responsible? How television frames political issues.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

James, F. J., Romine, J., & Terry, P. R. (2002). Big city labor markets and immigrant economic performance. *Policy Studies Journal, 30*(1), 107-131.

Jasinskaja-Lahti, I., Liebkind, K., Jaakkola, M., & Reuter, A. (2006). Perceived discrimination, social support networks, and psychological well-being among three immigrant groups. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 37*(3), 293-311.

Jayanetti, S., & Tilakaratna, G. (2005). Macroeconomic policy choices for growth and poverty reduction: The impact of trade liberalization on poverty in Sri Lanka. Ottawa, ON, Canada: The North- South Institute.

Jayaweera, S. (1990). Women, education, and empowerment in Asia. *Gender and Education, 9*(4), 411-423.

Jayaweera, S., & Shanmugam, T. (2001). *Women in garment and textile industries in Sri Lanka: Gender roles and relations.* Study Series No. 21. Colombo, Sri Lanka: Centre for Women's Research (CENWOR).

Jersild, A. T. (1965). Social and individual origins of the self. In D. E. Hamachek (Ed.), *The self in growth, teaching and learning* (pp. 196-208). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Johnson, J. A., & Johnson, M. S. (2008). New city domesticity and the tenacious second shift. *Journal of Family Issues, 29*(4), 487-515.

Jung, C. (1933). *Modern man in search of a soul*. New York, NY: Harcourt, Brace & World.

Justin, M. (2003). Walking between two worlds: The bicultural experience of second-generation East Indian Canadian women. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. McGill University.

Kanfer, R., Wanberg, C. R., & Kantrowitz, T. M. (2001). Job search and employment: A personality-motivational analysis and meta-analytic review. Journal *of Applied Psychology, 86,* 837-855.

Kieselbach, T. (1988). Help seeking and coping with unemployment. In R. A. Young & W. A. Borgen, (Eds.), *Methodological approaches to the study of career* (pp.163-185). Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group.

Kieselbach, T., & Lunser, A. (1990). Psychosocial counselling for the unemployed within the framework of trade-union oriented work. *Journal of Employment Counseling, 27*(4), 191-207.

Kieselbach, T., & Svensson, P. G. (1988). Health and social policy responses to unemployment in Europe. *Journal of Social Issues, 44,* 173-191.

Kim, J. K. (1988). *Cross-cultural adaptation: Current approaches*. Young Yun Kim & William B. Gudykunst (Eds.) Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

King, L. A., Scollon, C. K., Ramsey, C., & Williams, T. (2000). Stories of life transition: Subjective well-being and ego development in parents of children with Down Syndrome. *Journal of Research in Personality, 34*,509-536.

Klassen**,** R. M. (2004). A cross-cultural investigation of the efficacy beliefs of South Asian immigrant and Anglo Canadian non-immigrant early adolescents. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 96*(4), 731-742.

Kondratuk, T. B., Hausdorf, P. A., Korabik, K., & Rosin, H. M. (2003). Linking career mobility with corporate loyalty: How does job change relate to organizational commitment? *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 65*(2), 332-349.

Krau, E. (1984). Commitment to work in immigrants: Its function and peculiarities. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 24*, 329–339.

Labenne, W. D., & Greene, B. I. (1969). *Educational implications of self-concept theory.* Pacific Palisades, CA: Goodyear.

Lacroix, M. (2004). Refugee policy and the social construction of the refugee claimant subjectivity: Understanding refugeeness. *Journal of Refugee Studies, 17*(2), 147-166.

Lam, L. (1996). *From being uprooted to surviving: Resettlement of Vietnamese-Chinese 'Boat People' in Montreal, 1980-1999*. Toronto, ON, Canada: York Lanes Press.

Law, B. (2000). For richer? for poorer? for worker? – for citizen! In R. Best (Ed.*), Education for Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development.* London: Cassell.

Law, B., Meijers, F., & Wijers, G. (2002). New perspectives on carer and identity in the contemporary world. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling, 30*(4), 431-449.

Lee, C. L. (1984). An investigation of the psychosocial variables in the occupational aspirations and expectations of rural black and white adolescents: Implication for vocational education. *Journal of Research and Development in Education, 17*(3), 28-34.

Lee, G., & Westwood, M. J. (1996). Cross cultural adjustment issues faced by immigrant professionals. *Journal of Employment Counseling, 33(1),* 29-42.

Lent, R. W., Brown, S. D., & Hackett, G. (1996). Social cognitive career theory. In D. Brown & L. Brooks (Eds.), *Career Choice and Development* (pp. 255-311). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Lent, R. W., & Worthington, R. L. (1999). Applying career development theories to the school to work transition process. *The Career Development Quarterly, 47*, 291-296.

Leong, F. T. L. (1995). (Ed.). *Career Development and Vocational Behavior of Ractial and Ethnic Minorities.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Leong, F. T. L., & Brown, M. T. (1995). Theoretical issues in cross-cultural career development: Cultural validity and cultural specificity. In W. B. Walsh & S. H. Osipow (Eds.), *Handbook of vocational psychology: Theory, research and practice* (pp. 143-180). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Leong, F. T. L., & Gim-Chung, R. H. C. (1995). Career assessment and intervention for Asian Americans. In F. T. L. Leong (Ed.), *Career development and vocational behavior of racial and ethnic minorities* (pp. 193-226). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Levinson, D. J. (1986). A conception of adult development. *American Psychologist, 41*(1), 3-13.

Levinson, D. J., Darrow, C. N., Klein, E. B., Levinson, M. H., & McKee, B. (1978). *The seasons of a man's life.* New York, NY: Ballantine Books.

Levinson, D. J., & Levinson, J. L. (1996). *The seasons of a woman's life.* New York, NY: Alfred Knopf.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (2000). Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions, and emerging confluences. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research,* (2nd ed., pp. 163-188). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Lindert, J., von Ehrenstein, O. S., Priebe, S., Mielck, A., & Brahler, E. (2009). Depression and anxiety in labor migrants and refugees: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Social Science & Medicine, 69*(2), 246-257.

Linley, P. A., & Joseph, S. (2005). The human capacity for growth through adversity. *American Psychologist, 60*(3), 262-264.

Majka, L., & Mullan, B. (1992). Employment retention, area of origin and type of social support among refugees in the Chicago area. *International Migration Review, 26*(3), 899-926.

Mak, A. S., Westwood, M. J., Ishiyama, F. I., & Barker, M. C. (1999). Optimising conditions for learning sociocultural compentencies for success. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 23*(1), 77-90.

Malhotra, A. (1991). Gender and changing generational relations: Spouse choice in Indonesia. *Demography, 28*(4), 549-570.

Malhotra, A., & Degraff, D. S. (1997). Entry versus success in the labor force: Young women's employment in Sri Lanka. *World Development, 25*(3), 379-394.

Malhotra, A., & Mather, M. (1997). Do schooling and work empower women in developing countries? Gender and domestic decisions in Sri Lanka. *Sociological Forum, 12*(4), 599-630.

Malhotra, A., & Tsui, A. O. (1996). Marriage timing in Sri Lanka: The role of modem norms and ideas. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 58*(2), 476-490.

Malhotra, A., & Tsui, A. O. (1999). Work and marriage: Mother-daughter similarities in Sri Lanka. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies, 30*(2), 219-231.

Mallinckrodt, B., & Bennett, J. (1992). Social support and the impact of job loss in dislocated blue-collar workers. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 39*, 482-489.

Man, G. (2002). Globalization and the erosion of the welfare state: Effects on immigrant women from China and Hong Kong. *Canadian Woman Studies/Les cahiers de la femme, 21/22*(4/1), 26-32.

Man, G. (2004). Gender, work and migration: Deskilling Chinese immigrant women in Canada. *Women's Studies International Forum, 27*, 135-148.

Marger, M. N. (2001). The use of social and human capital among Canadian business immigrants. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 27*(3), 439-453.

Matsuoka, A., & Sorensen, J. (1991). Ethnic identity and social service delivery: Some models examined in relation to immigrants and refugees from Ethiopia. *Canadian Social Work Review 8*(2), 255-268.

Matthews, B. (1995). University education in Sri Lanka in context: Consequences of deteriorating standards. *Pacific Affairs, 68*(1), 77-94.

Maxwell, J. A. (1996). Qualitative research design: An interactive approach. London, UK: Sage.

Maykut, P., & Morehouse, R. (1994). *Beginning qualitative research: A philosophic and practical guide*. London, UK: The Falmer Press.

McAdams, D. P. (1985). *Power, intimacy and the life story: Personological inquiries and identity*. New York, NY: Dorsey.

McAdams, D. P. (2004). The redemptive self: Narrative identity in America today. In D. R. Beike, J. M. Lampien, & D. A. Behrend (Eds.), *The self and memory* (pp. 95-115). New York: Psychology Press.

McDate, K. (1988). *Barriers to recognition of the credentials of immigrants in Canada.* Ottawa, ON, Canada: Institute for Research on Public Policy.

McGilvray, D. (1989). Households in Akkaraipattu: Dowry and domestic organization among matrilineal Tamils and Moors of Sri Lanka. In J. N. Gray & D. J. Mearns (Eds.), *Society from the inside out: Anthropological perspectives on the South Asian household* (pp. 192-235). London, UK: Sage Publications.

McWhirter, E. H., Hackett, G., & Bandalos, D. (1998). A causal model of the educational plans and career expectations of Mexican American high school girls. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 45,* 166-181.

Mead, G.H. (1934). *Mind, Self, and Society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Mehra, B. (2001). Research or personal quest? Dilemmas in studying my own kind. In B. M. Merchant & A. I. Willis (Eds.), *Multiple and intersecting identities in qualitative research* (pp. 69-82). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Meijers, F. (1998). The development of a career identity. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling, 20,* 191-207.

Menjívar, C. (1997). Immigrant kinship networks and the impact of the receiving context: Salvadorans in San Francisco in the early 1990s. *Social Problems, 44,* 104-123.

Merchant, B. M. (2001). Negotiating the boundaries and sometimes missing the mark: A White researcher and a Mexican American research assistant. In B. M. Merchant & A. I. Willis (Eds.), *Multiple and intersecting identities in qualitative research* (pp. 1-18). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Merriam, S. B., Johnson-Bailey, J., Lee, M-Y., Kee, Y., Ntseane, G., & Muhamad, M. (2001). Power and positionality: Negotiating insider/outsider status within and across cultures. *International Journal of Lifelong Education, 20*(5), 405-416.

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1984). *Qualitative data analysis: A sourcebook of new methods*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Ministry of Education. (2009). Historical Overview of Education in Sri Lanka. Retrieved from http://www.moe.gov.lk/modules.php?name=Content&pa=showpage&pid=7

Minkler, M., & Biller, R. P. (1979). Role shock: A tool for conceptualizing stresses accompanying disruptive role transitions. *Human Relations, 32*(2), 125-140.

Morrow, P. (1993). *The theory and measurement of work commitment*. Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

Morrow, S. (2007). Qualitative research in counselling psychology: Conceptual foundations. *Counselling Psychologist, 35*, 209-235.

Murray, M. (2000). Levels of narrative analysis in health psychology. *Journal of Health Psychology*, *5*, 337-348.

Murray, M. (2003). Narrative psychology and narrative analysis. In P. M. Camic, J. E. Rhodes, & L. Yardley (Eds.), *Qualitative research in psychology: Expanding perspectives in methodology and design* (pp. 95-112*)*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Naidoo, A.V. (1986).Value conflicts for South Asian women in multicultural Canada. In L. H. Ekstrand (Ed.). *Ethnic minorities and immigrants in a cross-cultural perspective* (pp. 132-146). The Netheriands: Swets & Zeitlinger.

Naidoo, A. V. (1998). *Career Maturity: A Review of Four Decades of Research.* Bellville, South Africa: University of the Western Cape.

Naidoo, J., & Davis, C. (1988). Canadian South Asian Women in Transition: A Dualistic View of Life. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, *19*(2), 311–327.

Nee, V., & Sanders, J. (2001). Understanding the diversity of immigrant incorporation: a forms-of-capital model. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 24*(3), 386-411.

Nicholson, N. (1984). A theory of work role transitions. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 29*(2), 172-191.

Nicholson, N. (1987). The transition cycle: A conceptual framework for the analysis of change and human resources management. In K. M. Rowland & G. R. Ferris (Eds.), *Research in personnel and human resources management* (pp. 167–222). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

Nicholson, N., & West, M. A. (1989). Transitions, work histories and the myth of careers. In M. B. Arthur, T. Hall & B. Lawrence (Eds.), *Handbook of career theory* (pp. 181-199). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Noh, S., Speechley, M., Kaspar, V., & Wu, Z. (1992). Depression in Korean immigrants in Canada. II. Correlates of gender, work, and marriage. *Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease, 180*(9), 578-582.

Ohlott, P. J., Ruderman, M. N., & MacCauley, C. D. (1994). Gender differences in managers' developmental job experiences. *The Academy of Management Journal, 37*(1), 46-67.

Oishi, N. (2002). *Gender and migration: An integrative approach*. San Diego, CA: Center for Comparative Immigration Studies.

Olmedo, E. L. (1979). Mutual acculturation: A psychometric perspective. *American Psychologist, 34*, 1064–1070.

Ollerenshaw, J. A., & Creswell, J. W. (2002). Data analysis in narrative research: A comparison to two restorying data analysis approaches. *Qualitative Inquiry, 8*, 329-347.

Ooka, E. (2001). Social capital and income attainment among Chinese immigrant entrepreneurs in Toronto. *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal, 10*, 123-144.

Ooka, E., & Wellman, B. (2003). Does social capital pay off more within or between ethnic groups? Analyzing job searchers in five Toronto ethnic groups. In E. Fong (Ed.), *Inside the Mosaic* (pp. 199-226). Toronto, ON, Canada: University of Toronto Press.

Osipow, S. H. (1983). *Theories of Career Development* (3rd ed). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Osipow, S. H. & Littlejohn, E. M. (1995). Toward a multicultural theory of career development: Prospects and dilemmas. In F. T. L. Leong (Ed.), *Career development and vocational behaviour of racial and ethnic minorities* (pp. 251-262). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Ostroff, C., & Clark, M. A. (2001). Maintaining an internal market: Antecedents of willingness to change jobs. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 59* (425-453).

O'Toole, J. (1981). *Making America work*. New York, NY: Continuum Books.

Pals, J. L., & McAdams, D. P. (2004). The transformed self: A narrative understanding of posttraumatic growth. *Psychological Inquiry,* 15(1),65-68.

Patton, M. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Pavlenko, A. (2002). Narrative study: Whose story is it anyway? *TESOL Quarterly, 36*(2), 213-218.

Pavlenko, A., & Blackledge, A. (2004). *Negotiation of identities in multilingual contexts*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters Limited.

Pennebaker, J. W. (1997). Writing about emotional experiences as a therapeutic process. *Psychological Science, 8*(3), 162-166.

Pinnegar, S. & Daynes, J. (2007). Locating narrative inquiry historically. In Clandinin, D. J. (Ed.), *Handbook of narrative inquiry: Mapping a methodology* (pp. 1-34). Thousands Oaks, CA: Sage.

Pohjola, A. (1991). Social networks - help or hindrance to the migrant? *International Migration, 29*(3), 435-444.

Polkinghorne, D. E. (1988). *Narrative knowing and the human sciences*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Portes, A. (1998). Social capital: Its origins and applications in modern sociology. *Annual Review of Sociology, 24*, 1-24.

Portes, A., & Rumbaut, R. G. (2001). *Legacies: The story of the immigrant second*

generation. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press and Russell Sage Foundation.

Potocky-Tripodi, M. (2001). Micro and macro determinants of refugee economic status. *Journal of Social Service Research, 27*(4), 33-60.

Potocky-Tripodi, M. (2003). Refugee economic adaptation: Theory, evidence, and

implications for policy and practice. *Journal of Social Service Research, 30*(1), 63-91.

Potocky-Tripodi, M. (2004). The role of social capital in immigrant and refugee economic adaptation. *Journal of Social Service Research (31)*1, 59-91.

Pratzner, F. C., & Ashley, W. L. (1984). Occupational adaptability and transferable skills: Preparing today's adults for tomorrow's careers. In C. H. Shulman (Ed.), *Adults and the changing workplace: 1985 Yearbook of the American Vocational Association* (pp.13-22). Arlington, VA: American Vocational Association.

Prince, J. B. (2003). Career opportunity and organizational attachment in a blue-collar unionized environment. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 63,* 136-150.

Raghuram, P., & Kofman, E. (2004). Out of Asia: Skilling, re-skilling and deskilling of female migrants. *Women's Studies International Forum, 27,* 95-100.

Rajasingham-Senanayake, D. (2004) Between reality and representation: Women's agency in war and post-conflict Sri Lanka. *Cultural Dynamics 16*(2/3),141-168.

Rakhsha, G. (1999)**.** The story behind a tree: Career successes of immigrant women. *Dissertation Abstracts International:* Section B: The Sciences and Engineering, *60*(9-B), 4946.

Rapley, T. (2004). Interviews. In C. Seale, G. Gobo, J. F. Gubrium, & D. Silverman (Eds.), *Qualitative research practice* (pp. 15-33). London, UK: Sage.

Reitz, J. G. (2001). Immigrant success in the knowledge economy: Institutional change and the immigrant experience in Canada, 1970–1995. *Journal of Social Issues, 57*(3), 579–613.

Reitz, J. G., & Sklar, S. M. (1997). Culture, race and the economic integration of immigrants. *Sociological Forum, 12*(2), 233-277.

Renaud, J., Piché, V., & Godin, J.-F. (2003). "One's bad and the other one's worse": Differences in economic integration between asylum seekers and refugees selected abroad. *Canadian Ethnic Studies, 35*(2), 86-133.

Ricoeur, P. (1991). *A Ricoeur reader: Reflection and imagination*. Toronto, ON, Canada: University of Toronto Press.

Rodríguez-García, D. (2010). Beyond assimilation and multiculturalism: A critical review of the debate on managing diversity. *International Migration and Integration,* 11, 251-271.

Rojewski, J. W. (2005). Occupational aspirations: Constructs, meanings, and application. In S. D. Brown & R. W. Lent (Eds.), *Career development and counseling: Putting theory and research to work* (pp. 131-154). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley.

Rojewski, J. W., & Hill, R. B. (1998). Influence of gender and academic risk behavior on career decision making and occupational choice in early adolescence. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk, 3,* 265-287.

Rojewski, J. W., & Kim, H. (2003). Career choice patterns and behaviour of work-bound youth during early adolescence. *Journal of Career Development, 30,* 89-108.

Rojewski, J. W., & Yang, B. (1997). Longitudinal analysis of select influences on adolescents' occupational aspirations. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 51*, 375-410.

Rosenbach, C., & Renneberg, B. (2008). Positive change after severe burn injuries. *Journal of Burn Care Research*, *29*, 638–643.

Rosenberg, M. (1979). *Conceiving the Self*. Malabar, FL: Krieger.

Rumbaut, R. G. (1985). Mental health and refugee experience: A comparative study of Southeast Asian refugees. In T. Owan, B. Baliatout, & K. M. Lin (Eds.), *Southeast Asian mental health: Treatment, prevention, services, and research* (pp. 433-486). Rockville, MD: National Institute of Mental Health.

Rusbult, C. E., & Farrell, D. (1983). A longitudinal test of the investment model: The impact on job satisfaction, job commitment, and turnover of variations in rewards, costs, alternatives, and investments. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 68*(3), 429-438.

Rusbult, C. E., & Farrell, D., Rogers, G., & Mainous, A. G., III. (1988). Impact of exchange variables on exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect: An integrative model of responses to declining job satisfaction. *Academy of Management Journal, 31*(3), 599-629.

Sassen, S. (2000). Women's burden: Counter-geographies of globalization and the feminization of survival. *Journal of International Affairs*, *53*(2), 503-524.

Savickas, M. L. (1997). Career adaptability: An integrative construct for life-span, life-space theory. *Career Development Quarterly*, *45*(3), 247-259.

Savickas, M. L. (2002). Career construction: A developmental theory of vocational behavior. In D. Brown & Associates (Eds.), *Career Choice and Development* (4th ed., pp. 149-205). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Schoon, I., & Parsons, S. (2002). Teenage aspirations for future careers and occupational outcomes. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 60*, 262-288.

Schwandt, T. A. (2001). *Dictionary of qualitative inquiry*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Schwefel, D. (1986). Unemployment, health and health services in German-speaking countries. *Social Sciences and Medicine, 22*(4), 409-430.

Schwefel, D., Svensson, P. G., & Zollner, H. (1987). *Unemployment, social vulnerability and health in Europe.* Berlin, Germany: Springer Verlag.

Searle, W., & Ward, C. (1990). The prediction of psychological and sociocultural adjustment during cross-cultural transitions. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 14*, 449-464.

Seidman, I. (2006). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Sfard, A., & Prusak, A. (2005). Telling identities: In search of an analytic tool for investigating learning as a culturally shaped activity. *Educational Researcher, 34*(4), 14-22.

Sinacore, A., Mikhail, A.-M., Kassan, A., & Lerner, A. (2009). Cultural transitioning of Jewish immigrants: Education, employment and integration. *International Journal of Educational and Vocational Guidance, 9*, 157-176.

Singh, R., & Greenhaus, J. H. (2004). The relation between career decision-making strategies and person-job fit: A study of job changers. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 64*(1), 198-221.

Slay, H. S. (2006). The influence of career identity, and social networks on career transition magnitude. (Doctoral dissertation, University of Maryland). Retrieved http://www.lib.umd.edu/drum/bitstream/1903/3652/1/umi-umd-3551.pdf

Smart, R., & Peterson, C. (1997). Super's career stages and the decision to change careers. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 51*(3), 358-374.

Smith, D. (1975). An analysis of ideological structures and how women are excluded considerations for academic women. *Canadian Review Sociology and Anthropology 12*(4), 353–369.

Statistics Canada. (1996). 1996 Census of population. Retrieved from: http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/info/census96.cfm

Statistics Canada. (2001). Topic based tabulations of earnings of Canadians. Retrieved from http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/home/index.cfm

Statistics Canada (2001a). *Ethnocultural portrait of Canada. Selected cultural and labour force characteristics (58), selected ethnic groups (100), age groups (5A), sex (3) and single and multiple ethnic origin responses (3) for population 15 years and over, for Canada, Provinces, Territories and census metropolitan areas, 2001 census - 20% sample data.* Retrieved from http://www.statcan.gc.ca/bsolc/olc-cel/olc-cel?catno=97F0010X&chropg=1&lang=eng

Statistics Canada (2001b). Wage and salary groups (22) in constant (2000) dollars, sex (3), visible minority groups (14) and immigrant status (3) for paid workers 15 years and over, for Canada, provinces and territories, 1995 and 2000 – 20% sample data. Retrieved from http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/products/standard/themes/RetrieveProductTable.cfm?Temporal=2001&PID=57113&GID=355313&METH=1&APATH=3&PTYPE=55496&THEME=53&AID=0&FREE=0&FOCUS=0&VID=0&VNAMEE=&VNAMEF=&GC=0&GK=0&SC=1&SR=1&RL=0&CPP=99&RPP=9999&d1=2&d2=3&d3=0.

Strauss, A. L. (1987). *Qualitative analysis for social scientists*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Strayer, J. (2002). The dynamics of emotions and life cycle identity. *Identity: An International Journal of Theory and Research, 2*(1), 47-79.

Sue, S., & Kitano, H. H. L. (1973). Stereotypes as a measure of success. *Journal of Social Issues, 29*, 83-98.

Sue, S., & Okazaki, S. (1990). Asian-American educational achievements: A phenomenon in search of an explanation. *American Psychologist, 45*, 913-920.

Super, D. E. (1949). *Appraising vocational fitness by means of psychological tests*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.

Super, D. E. (1953). A theory of vocational development. *American Psychologist, 8*, 185-190.

Super, D. E. (1957). *The psychology of careers*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.

Super, D. E. (1980). A life-span, life-space approach to career development. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 16,* 282-298.

Super, D. E. (1981). A developmental theory: Implementing a self-concept. In D. H. Montross & C. J. Shinkman (Eds.), *Career development in the 1980s: Theory and practice* (pp. 28-42). Springfield, IL: Thomas.

Super, D. E. (1990). A life-span, life-space approach to career development . In D. E. Brown & L. Brooks (Eds.), *Career choice and development* (pp. 197-261). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Super, D. E., & Knasel, E. G. (1979). *Development of a Model, Specifications, and Sample Items for Measuring Career Adaptability (Vocational Maturity) in Young Blue Collar Workers*. Cambridge, England: National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling, and Ottawa, Canada: Canada Employment and Immigration.

Super, D. E., & Knasel, E. G. (1981). Career development in adulthood: Some theoretical problems. *British Journal of Guidance and Counseling, 9*, 194-201.

Super, D. E., Savickas, M. L., & Super, C. M. (1996). The life-span, life-space approach to careers. In D. Brown, L. Brooks & Associates (Eds.), *Career choice and development* (pp. 121-178). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Swanson, J. L. (1995). The process and outcomes of career counseling. In W. B. Walsh & S. H. Osipow (Eds.), *Handbook of vocational psychology* (pp. 217-260). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Swanson, J. L., & Fouad, N. (1999). Applying theories of person-environment fit to the transition from school to work. *The Career Development Quarterly, 47*, 337-347.

Swanson, J. L., & Gore, P. A., Jr. (2000). Advances in vocational psychology theory and research. In S. D. Brown & R. W. Lent (Eds.), *Handbook of counselling psychology* (pp. 233-269). New York, NY: Wiley.

Tang, M., Fouad, N., A., & Smith, P. L. (1999). Asian Americans' career choices: A path model to examine factors influencing their career choices. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 54*(1), 142-157.

Tedeschi, R. G., & Calhoun, L. G. (2004). Beyond the concept of recovery: Growth and the experience of loss. *Death Studies, 32*(1), 27-39.

Tian, G. (2000). Chinese refugees coping with stress in Toronto. In L. Dridger & S. Halli (Eds.), *Race and racism: Canada's challenge* (pp. 253-276). Montreal, QC, Canada: McGill University Press.

Thomas, M. J. (1976). Realism and socioeconomic status(ses) of occupational plans of low SES black and white male adolescents. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 23*, 46-49.

Thomas, D., & Rappak, J. P. (1998). Stabilité de l'emploi et adaptation des immigrants : examen des données de l'enquête sur la dynamique du travail et du revenu. Ottawa, ON: Statistics Canada.

Tolley, E. (2003). The skilled worker class: selection criteria in the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act. In E. Carasco, D. Calloway, S. J. Malkin, & A. Macklin (Eds.), *Immigration and refugee law: Cases, materials, and*

commentary (pp. 333-341). Toronto, ON, Canada: Emond Montgomery Publications.

Troyna, B., & Smith, D. I. (1983). *Racism, school and the labour market*. Leicester, UK: National Youth Bureau.

United Nations Development Programme. (2002). *Human development report 2002: Deepening democracy in a fragmented world*. Retrieved from http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2002/chapters/

United Nations Development Programme. (2005). *Human development report 2005. International development at a crossroads: Aid, trade and security in an unequal world.* Retrieved from http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2005/chapters/

Van Hooft, E. A. J., Born, M. P., Taris, T. W., & van der Flier, H. (2004). Job search and the theory of planned behavior: Minority-majority group differences in the Netherlands. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 65, 366-390.

Van Ryn, M., & Vinokur, A. D. (1992). How did it work? An examination of the mechanisms through which an intervention for the unemployed promoted job-search behavior. *American Journal of Community Psychology 20*(5), 577-597.

Vinokur, A., Schul, Y., Vuori, J., & Price, R. (2000). Two years after a job loss: Long-term impact of the JOBS program on reemployment and mental health. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 5,* 32–47.

Weaver, H. N. (2005). Reexamining what we think we know: A lesson learned from Tamil refugees. *Affilia, 20*(2), 238-245.

Weiner, M. (1996). Determinants of immigrant integration: An international

comparative analysis. In N. Carmon (Ed.), *Immigration and integration in post-industrial societies: Theoretical analysis and policy-related research* (pp. 46-62). London, UK: Macmillan.

West, C. K., & Fish, J. A. (1973). *Relationship between self-concept and school achievement: A survey of empirical investigations* (Final report). Urbana, IL: National Institute of Education.

West, M. A. (1987). Role innovation in the world of work. *British Journal of Social Psychology, 26*, 305-315.

West, M. A., & Rushton, R. (1989). Mismatches in the work-role transition. *Journal of Occupational Psychology, 62*, 271-286.

Westermeyer, J., Neider, J., & Vang, T. F. (1984). Acculturation and mental health: A study of Hmong refugees at 1.5 and 3.5 years postmigration. *Social Science & Medicine, 18*, 87-93.

Westermeyer, J., Vang, T. F., & Neider, J. (1983). Migration and mental health among Hmong refugees: Association of pro- and postmigration factors with self-rating scales. *The Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease, 171*, 132–139.

Wickramasinghe, V., & Jayabandu, S. (2007). Towards workplace flexibility: flexitime arrangements in Sri Lanka. *Employee Relations 29*,(6), 554-575.

Wijayaratne, A. (2006). Library Automation of Sri Lanka: challenges facing by the developing countries. In *Proceedings of National Conference of Library and Information Science, Colombo 29 June 2006,* Sri Lanka Library Association, Colombo.

Wilber, K. (1989). *Spectrum of consciousness*. Wheaton, IL: Quest Books.

Winne, P. H., & Marx, R. W. (1981, April). *Construct validity in self-concept measurement: Preliminary evidence for a general facet compensatory model.* Paper session presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Los Angeles.

Wong, M. G., & Hirschman, C. (1983). Labor force participation and socioeconomic attainment of Asian-American women. *Sociological Perspectives, 26*(4), 423-446.

World Bank. (1994). *Averting the Old Age Crisis. Policies to Protect the Old and Promote Growth*. Washington, DC: The World Bank.

Xu, D. (2006). *Job-hunting experiences of immigrant women in Canada: A study of professional women from the People's Republic of China - Working Paper No. WP01-06*. Retrieved from http://www.pcerii.metropolis.net/WorkingPapers/DanXu.pdf

Yeoh, B. S. A., & Huang, S. (2000). ''Home'' and ''away'': Foreign domestic workers and negotiations of diasporic identity in Singapore. *Women's Studies International Forum*, *23*(4), 413-429.

Ying, Y., & Akutsu, P. D. (1995). Psychological adjustment of Southeast Asian refugees: The contribution of sense of coherence. *Journal of Community Psychology, 25*, 125–139.

Yost, A. D., & Lucas, M. S. (2002). Adjustment issues affecting employment for immigrants from the former Soviet Union. *Journal of Employment Counseling, 39*, 153–170.

Yu, D. (2002). What happened to our fellow Chinese? *Chinese News, 20* December: B6.

Zhao, W., & Zhou, X. (2004). Chinese organizations in transition: Changing promotion patterns in the reform era. *Organization Science, 15*(2), 186-199.

Zong, L. (2004). International transference of human capital and occupational attainment of recent Chinese professional immigrants in Canada. *American Review of China Studies, 5*(1/2), 81-89.

Zurita, M. (2001). La mojada y el coyote: Experiences of a wetback researcher. In B. M. Merchant & A. I. Willis (Eds.), *Multiple and intersecting identities in qualitative research* (pp. 19-32). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Appendix A: Recruitment Letter

My name is Nilmini De Silva and I am a doctoral student in the Counselling Psychology Department of McGill University. I am planning to do my dissertation research on Sri Lankan immigrant women who had a career and are now facing changes to their career due to immigration. Although there is very little information about this subject, there is a lot of literature on immigrant women's difficulties with obtaining work. But not all immigrant women experience the same changes to their identity as working women as a result of the obstacles or successes in their careers. I would like to learn more about the way Sri Lankan immigrant women's identity as working women is affected by moving to Canada.

If you are a Sri Lankan immigrant woman and did higher studies at a university or professional training school, I would like to invite you to take part in this research project. I will ask you to fill out a demographic form and participate in a 90 minute interview where I will ask you some questions about your career. The interview will be taped and later transcribed, which you will receive a copy of in order to ensure that the transcript is correct. Women who have participated in this type of research before have often found it to be very rewarding to talk about and explore their own career changes.

If you choose to participate in this study, I can assure you that all information will be held in the strictest confidence. Any other person helping with this research will not have access to any participant's names and you will in no way be able to be identified in the final study. You are also free to refuse to answer any question or drop out of the study at any time. If you would like to participate in this study or would like further information, please get in touch with me at 450-672-2035 or at my e-mail address: nilmini.desilva@mcgill.ca.

Thank you for any consideration that you give to this project.

Appendix B: Research Consent Form

McGill University

Title of Research: An exploration of Sri Lankan immigrant women's career identity follo-wing employment experiences in Montreal.

Researcher: Nilmini De Silva, Ph.D. candidate, Counselling Psychology

Contact Information: tel: 514-969-0277; email: nilmini.desilva@mail.mcgill.ca

Supervisor: Dr. Jeeseon Park; tel: 514-398-3452; email: jeeseon.park@mcgill.ca

The purpose of this research is to study the career identity changes that take place after Sri Lankan women immigrate to Canada and seek work in Montreal. In other words, I am interested in understanding how your view of yourself as a worker developed after you started looking for work and started working in Montreal.

This research contributes towards my dissertation. Your confidentiality will be maintained throughout the entire study and your anonymity will be maintained from the moment the interviews are transferred into text (transcribed). As with all dissertations, my dissertation will be available in the university library and be accessible to the public. The dissertation will contain no information that will permit you to be identified by anyone reading the dissertation.

Your participation requires filling out a demographic form and then answering a few questions related to your career identity and work experiences. The whole interview may take from 60 to 120 minutes. The time and location of our interview will be at your own convenience or at my office at McGill University. The interview will be audio-taped and later written in text. Soon after, I will give you a summary of our interview so you can tell me if I have correctly understood what we discussed.

Your participation is entirely voluntary and you can choose to refuse to answer any question or even to stop the interview at any time. Only if you give me permission to indicate your identity in the text will anything you say be linked to you. If not, everything you say will be written in such a way that no one will be able to know that it was said by you. No person other than me will have access to the interview materials and they will be coded with numbers instead of names so that it will be impossible to identify them as originating from you.

You will be compensated $25.00 for your participation in the interview and $25.00 for your reviewing of the summary of the interview. You may contact me at any time if you have any questions about the study.

Your signature below serves to signify that you agree to participate in this study.

I have read the above information and I agree to participate in this study.

I wish to be identified in the report ____YES _____NO

I consent to audio-taping of the interview ____YES _____NO

Participant Signature: _____ Researcher's signature: _____

Participant Name: _____ Date: _____

Appendix C: Demographic Questionnaire

Please answer all of the following questions. Please tick off one answer and write the appropriate information wherever necessary.

1. Age: _____

2. Relationship Status:

_____ Married

_____ Single

_____ Common-Law

_____ Widowed

_____ Divorced/Separated

_____ Other, specify _____

3. Ethnic Group:

_____ Sinhalese

_____ Tamil

_____ Other, specify _____

4. Nationality:

_____Sri Lankan

_____Canadian

_____Other, specify _____

5. City of Residence:

_____ Montreal

_____ Toronto

_____ Other, specify _____

6. Education

_____ High School – DES or DEP? _____

_____ Some CEGEP – How many years? _____

_____ CEGEP – Which field? _____

_____ Some Professional Training – How many years? _____

_____ Professional Training – Cerficate or Diploma? _____

_____ Some University: How many years? _____

_____ University Degree – Which field? _____

_____ Some Graduate School – How many years? _____

_____ Graduate School – Which field? _____

7. Do you have children?

_____ Yes

_____ No

Please specify ages of all children living at home: _____

Have you stayed home full-time? _____

If so, how many years? _____ From _____ To _____

From _____ To _____ From _____ To _____

8. How many children were living at home when you were looking for work?

_____

9. Current Employment Status:

_____ Full time (35 hours or more)

_____ Part Time (less than 35 hours per week)

_____ Other _____

10. What was your last occupation prior to immigrating? _____

11. How long did you work in that occupation?_____

12. What is your present occupation? _____

13. What is your present position? _____

14. How long have you been in this position?_____

Appendix D: Participant Profiles

To reduce the length of the chapter on results, participant profiles will be provided here. Participants were Sri Lankan Sinhalese immigrant women of middle socio-economic class.

Lakshmi is a 42-year-old woman who immigrated to Quebec with her husband and son as sponsored permanent residents in 2006. She has been married for 17 years and her son is 14 years of age. Her husband worked as an air conditioning technician in Sri Lanka and currently holds a position doing welding work in a construction company in Montreal. In Sri Lanka, Lakshmi obtained a high school degree and worked as a nanny for one year, a data entry operator for five years and a receptionist at an international school for five years. After arriving in Montreal, she has been working part-time as a general help in a senior's home & full-time as a general help at a cookie factory from the time she arrived in Montreal in 2006.

Janani is a 25-year-old woman who immigrated to Quebec in 2007. She arrived as a permanent resident sponsored by her Sri Lankan Canadian husband. Her husband works as a technician in an Engineering Company and at present she is pregnant and expecting a child later this year. In Sri Lanka, she completed Advanced Level Studies (the equivalent of CEGEP studies in Quebec) and obtained a Diploma in Montessori Education for preschoolers. She was employed as a preschool teacher for 3 years in Sri Lanka. Since arriving in Quebec, she has not started to work but understands about the necessity of retraining herself to meet the requirements of the Quebec government. Currently she is following

English and French classes. Although she is younger than the other participants, she also has a well-developed career identity in Sri Lanka. Her case describes early career identity development in Quebec.

Malini is a 50-year-old woman who immigrated to Quebec in 2003. She arrived in Canada through being sponsored by her brother. She had married in 1993 and has been divorced since 2005, and has two daughters aged 13 and 15 years. In Sri Lanka, she had completed 11 years of schooling and passed the Ordinary Level Examination. Then she followed a professional training course in office administration. She had been employed in Sri Lanka as a stenographer in a government organization for five and a half years prior to migrating to Quebec. In Montreal, she worked as a Daycare Assistant for three years. Unable to work full-time due to health problems and taking care of her two children as a single mother, she sought other employment. It was very difficult to find work that accommodated her family situation. As a result, she has not been on a regular job for the last four years except for some occasional babysitting and cleaning work. She understands the necessity of retraining herself to obtain employment that would enable her to raise her children without difficulty. She has been following government-sponsored French classes for the past three months.

Devi is a 42-year-old woman who immigrated to Quebec in 2005. She arrived as a refugee with her husband and two daughters. She has been married for the last 20 years and her daughters are aged 15 and 18 years. Her husband works as a supervisor in a shipping and receiving company in Montreal. In Sri Lanka, she had completed her Advanced Level studies (equivalent to CEGEP)

and obtained a Diploma in secretarial work at a School of Commerce. She then worked as a secretarial accounts clerk for four years in Sri Lanka. After migrating to Quebec, she worked as a babysitter for one year and as a general help in a shipping and receiving company for two years. She has also been working as a sales assistant in a textile company for the past three months. She has followed French classes for 3 months.

Shanthi is a 47-year-old woman who immigrated to Quebec in 1990 as a refugee. She has been married for 21 years and has a daughter aged 17 years. Her husband works as a food services assistant in a seniors' home in Montreal. In Sri Lanka, she had done Advanced Level studies specializing in Commerce (CEGEP equivalent) and has been professionally trained as an Administrative Assistant. She had worked as a data entry clerk for 6.5 years at the time of leaving Sri Lanka. In 1994 she moved to Ottawa as she was unable to find an office job in Montreal without French. She returned to Montreal in 2002 for family reasons and worked as a general help in a video sales company and as a clerk in a warehouse. Again, she moved to Toronto in 2008 to find a suitable job for herself. She has been working full-time as a documentation clerk in Toronto for the past 1.5 years. She has obtained an Attestation of College Studies (A.E.C) in Micro-Computer Business Applications in Quebec and a High School Diploma (equivalent of D.E.S.) in Ontario.

Suneetha is a 66-year-old woman who immigrated to Quebec in 1989 as a refugee. In Sri Lanka her husband had worked as a police officer and in Montreal he had worked as a custodian of a church. He is now deceased. She has a

daughter 31 years and a son 30 years of age. She obtained a university degree in Philosophy and later obtained training as an accountant and as a computer systems analyst in Sri Lanka. She has worked as a Senior Executive Officer for 14 years and as an Assistant Director of Administration for 3. 5 years in government corporations in Sri Lanka. In Quebec, she worked as a teaching assistant in a school for handicapped children, then obtained an Attestation of College Studies (A.E.C.) in Early Childhood Education. Also she has followed the government sponsored one year full time French course. She has been an early childhood educator for 9 years and now is self-employed and working full-time as a home daycare provider for the past 6 years.

Damayanthi is a 56-year-old woman who immigrated to Quebec in 1977 when she was sponsored by her Sri Lankan Canadian husband. She has 2 sons of 26 and 30 years of age and got divorced in 1998. In Sri Lanka, she had completed a university degree in Home Science and worked for 11 years as a High school teacher. Since arriving in Quebec, she has been working in daycare centers and retrained herself by completing an Attestation of College Studies (A.E.C.) in Early Childhood Education. She has also followed the government sponsored one year full-time French course. She has since been working full-time as an early childhood educator for 14 years, and of these, for 4 years she worked as a director of a large daycare center.

Surya is a 40-year-old woman who immigrated to Quebec as a refugee in 1993. She is married and has 2 sons aged 13 and 11 years. Her husband was a building supervisor in Sri Lanka and in Montreal he developed and has been

running a textile import business for the last 13 years. In Sri Lanka, she had completed her Advanced Levels (equivalent to CEGEP) and obtained a diploma in architecture. She had worked as an architect for a prestigious governmental corporation for 1 year. After arriving in Quebec, she worked as general help in a factory and then worked in her husband's family business as a warehouse manager for 13 years. She then took up a hairdressing course and has been working part-time as a hairdresser for the past year.

Geetha is a 45-year-old woman who immigrated to Quebec as a refugee in 1993. She was married in 1988 and has 2 daughters aged 20 and 13 years. Her husband worked as a telecommunication technician in Sri Lanka and works in Montreal as a mechanical assistant in a shipping and receiving company. In Sri Lanka, she obtained her Advanced Level diploma and studied commerce in a technical college. She had worked as a senior administrative assistant for 5 years by the time she left Sri Lanka. After arriving in Quebec, she had been self-employed as a sewing machine operator for 9 years. Following that, for the past 5 years, she has been working full-time in a factory and rose to the position of warehouse inspector.

Pooja is a 59-year-old woman who arrived in Quebec when she was in 1993. She is married and has 2 sons aged 31 and 27 years. Her husband has been a building inspector for 22 years in Sri Lanka and works here as a mechanical assembly operator in a factory. In Sri Lanka she completed her education up to Advanced Level and obtained a professional diploma in teacher training. She was a high school level teacher for 20 years in government schools in Sri Lanka. In

Montreal she worked as a self-employed sewing machine operator for 8 years. Since then she has been working at her current job as a mechanical assembly operator in a factory for the past 6 years.

Appendix E: Interview Summaries

Participant 001 Summary

Summary

Before coming to Canada, I worked as an efficient data entry operator in Sri Lanka. I moved to Montreal with the expectation of becoming a productive worker and fulfilling my goals in life. I spent the first two years in obtaining my landed immigrant status, my daughter was born at about the same time. I also obtained a college attestation in computer and business systems within this period. Then I started searching for work, but because of the French language requirements in Quebec, I was unable to find a suitable position in Montreal.

Because of this situation, I moved to Ottawa and very quickly found work in the same occupation I held in Sri Lanka. After my first contract ended, I went on unemployment insurance and made use of that time to obtain the Canadian high school equivalence. Thereafter I was gainfully employed in Ottawa for about 5 years. Then to be with my relatives for the benefit of my daughter I moved back to Montreal. I expected that with my Canadian qualifications and experience, I will be able to obtain work this time. On the contrary, I was unable to find proper work in my field in Montreal for almost 5 years, to meet the day to day expenses of the family. I worked in factories doing manual labor jobs. Finally, after 4.5 years, I found a night job as a data entry operator, but being away at work in the night created many issues within the family.

Again, I decided to move to Toronto to find a data entry job in an office. There I found a job to my liking almost immediately and received several other offers for similar positions while I was holding the first job. After my first contract ended, I accepted another data entry position and I have been working on that job to date. I am very satisfied with my career at this point. But to obtain career satisfaction I had to sacrifice my emotional comforts such as leaving Montreal which is the city where I prefer to live with my relatives who give me a lot of emotional comfort and security.

Career Identity in Sri Lanka

I saw myself as a capable efficient worker and felt very satisfied and happy as a data entry operator in an international company based in Sri Lanka. I felt that my work in this company gave me a good training and a solid foundation and prepared me for the North American system and structure and corporate data entry work. I was recognized by my company as being an excellent data entry operator. This created a very strong foundation for my career identity and everything I did later was built on this solid foundation. I worked in this position for about seven years until I left for Canada

Career Identity in Quebec

Although I had the confidence of becoming a productive worker in Canada, I was unable to find any work in Montreal due to lack of French language requirements. Therefore I moved to Ottawa and found work immediately in a temporary position as a data entry operator. When my temporary contract ended, I went on unemployment insurance and made use of that time to go back to school

and obtain the Canadian high school equivalence. This helped me to get a permanent full-time data entry operator position which made me happy and satisfied and I stayed on that job for five and a half years. As my child was growing up and needed her relatives I had to leave that job unwillingly and move back to Montreal.

I was sad to leave my job in Ottawa but this time I thought that I will be able to find work in Montreal as now I have over 5 years of Canadian training and work experience. However, I was unable to get any kind of data entry work, again due to lack of French, and I had to accept labor-grade jobs, and it went on like that for almost five years. This made me feel very frustrated, financially badly affected and made me use my savings to meet my living expenses. In Montreal I always had to work outside my field of vocation. Finally after almost five years I found a part-time night job in my field but I was not satisfied as I needed a full-time day job.

It was too frustrating, and I decided to move to Toronto. There I got a job in my field within the first month itself, and that contract ended in 8 months. Then, while I was on unemployment, within a few weeks I was offered a full-time data entry job which I am currently holding. I am very satisfied with this job, although I would prefer a higher salary. From my perspective, French was the biggest barrier in Montreal, and it was very challenging and frustrating for me. I felt like I was going nowhere. It appeared like moving out of Montreal was the only way for my career development.

Chronology

I arrived in Montreal as a refugee and the immigration case took six to seven months for me to obtain immigration status. I was newly-married, my daughter was born just at this time, and I was a stay-at-home mother. It was the only time in my life that I had not worked. It was also a fun time so I didn't look for work during the first two years in Montreal. I made use of this free time to get retrained in data entry work and obtained a college attestation in Computer and Business Systems as I wanted to have Canadian qualifications to my credit.

Then I moved to Ottawa and found an agreeable data entry job. I held that position for five years, I was happy with it and felt secure and confidant in my work but I had to move to Montreal for the sake of my child. In Montreal my Canadian qualifications and experiences did not help me in obtaining a suitable job. For almost five years, I was able to get only manual labour positions. Because of the financial needs, I had to accept them. I constantly thought about my data entry job for which I was well-qualified. At last I was offered a job where I did some data entry type of work but it was a night shift in a warehouse environment and it was physically uncomfortable and disruptive to my family life. Eventually, though I really liked Montreal and had relatives there, I had to move to Toronto for the sake of my career prospects.

Moving again was very difficult, and I felt like I was starting life again. When I moved to Toronto, I immediately got a data entry position on contract for 8 months. After that, within 3 weeks I found another job, which I am holding to date.

At this point, 18 years after my arrival in Canada, I feel that I have gained qualifications, experience and achieved my career goals, and have reached my highest level. I feel that my employers recognize my efficient work right away. I also feel that my Sri Lankan values such as being honest, hardworking, having a sense of appreciation, and giving my best efforts for my employment, do make me stand out among others.

Self Identity

Work is an important part of who I am. I see myself as a financial provider for my family. When I couldn't find work in Montreal, I felt frustrated, really sad. Nobody was willing to give me a job and it really affected the way I saw myself. I was really frustrated that I was not given the chance to prove myself for two years, which was a long period of time. Still I had the confidence that I could work, in my mind I knew I had the skills. At the same time, I also felt like I was losing my technical skills while working in manual labor positions. In addition, it made me reconsider my career identity and question what my career was.

I felt lost and scared to go back to my field because I felt I was losing my skills. I felt I couldn't continue like that, I wanted to do better. I felt like some part of my life was missing. I moved to Toronto because getting job satisfaction was so important for me. When I got my first job, I felt like a fish back into water. My career identity came back, it was a very big victory for me. I felt that I am worth something, that I can work, that I have the skills. It is important to me to have opportunities to work and I feel that in Toronto I will always have

opportunities. Even if I lose my job, I know that I could find another one soon. I feel like I can go ahead for many, many years because I am happy.

My career identity was formed when I was a young adult in Sri Lanka, and it was very deeply ingrained in me. I carried this image of my career identity with me ever since I was 21. Part of it is also the honesty, the accuracy, punctuality, etc. Since arriving in Canada, I have done all types of jobs. Kinds of jobs that I would never have considered doing in Sri Lanka, jobs which gave me no satisfaction. I took up these jobs simply because I needed the money.

Now that I have come back to the job that I did in Sri Lanka, I feel very happy and very satisfied. I feel that I have come full circle and am not seeking anything more professionally. I feel that it is very important to do the type of work that one can enjoy, even if the pay may not be as good as one wishes. What is important to me is to feel I have the right job, for which I have the required skills. Also, I feel it's important to upgrade the skills continuously, on the job at least. I would like to continue to work for a long time. My goal is to buy a house. I had that goal in Ottawa and Montreal too, but was not able to fulfill it then. Now that I am professionally stable, I am looking forward to fulfill that dream.

Participant 002 Summary

Summary

I have been a high-school mathematics teacher for twenty years in Sri Lanka. This was a well-respected government job with full benefits, and I was proud of my position. This was a job that I planned to achieve, and I prepared myself for it through my student years. I obtained the Advanced Level school certificate which is equivalent to CEGEP here, and I did a two-year diploma course at the teacher-training school. I was very proud and happy that I got the opportunity to teach in the same school that I studied.

With the qualifications and experience I had gained in Sri Lanka, I expected to find a similar job when I arrived in Montreal, Quebec. However, as the school system is different here I soon realized the need for retraining to meet the job requirements here in Montreal. Also, I felt the difficulty in getting a teaching position in Quebec without any knowledge of French. To work even in an English school, bilingualism was a requirement. Another barrier to my advancement was that the Sri Lankan qualifications were not recognized at a similar level by the Quebec government.

As I had to get into a job immediately to meet the financial needs of the family, I started to work as a sewing-machine operator which needed only my physical skills to do the job. I functioned as a self-employed person for eight years in this job. Although it was not the kind of career that I had targeted, I accepted it and carried on with it, as it provided the money that I needed to live here. Thereafter, I obtained a job in an electronic company as a mechanical

assembly operator, and I have been on this job for the last seven years. I feel generally satisfied with my current situation.

Career Identity

I held a well-respected position as a high-school teacher in Sri Lanka. But today, as a migrant worker in Quebec, I have not been able to obtain such an esteemed position due to lack of French language qualifications and other requirements applicable to Canadian standards. As I have enjoyed a 20 year long career in Sri Lanka, I do not feel that bad about the loss of my career identity as a teacher. Now I see my children's education as being more important than achieving my own career goals at this stage of my life. So I have engaged myself in this kind of convenient jobs that bring money to meet the family expenses. In the current workplace, I have made friends and gained experience in a different line of work. Now, I am looking forward to have an enjoyable retirement in this peaceful country.

When I talk with my community and friends, we all agree that the first generation of immigrants, especially if they arrive at an advanced age they often have to sacrifice their careers and other expectations for the sake of the future of their children. At present, I have a good feeling about the work I do, and do not worry about the status.

Chronology

In Sri Lanka, I had a very gratifying career as a high-school mathematics teacher for twenty years. I was very happy and proud of my position. Teaching was a well-respected position in Sri Lanka. Thereafter, I arrived in Montreal,

Quebec, with many hopes of continuing the career here. However, I realized that it was not possible, due to French language requirements and the equalization procedure of my qualifications and experience.

Although I wish to go for retraining and taking up language classes, the financial needs made me take up any job soon. Therefore, I started working as a sewing machine operator from home and became an independent worker. I stayed on this job for eight years. Even though it made me feel sad and frustrated to let go of my career identity as a teacher, I started to accept the situation, and took up work as a Mechanical Assembly Operator in an electronics company where my husband and many other Sri Lankans were already employed. I have now been in this company for seven years.

I realize that employment conditions in Sri Lanka and here in Montreal are different, and I have accepted the situation. My career path has changed but I have gained new skills in a different field. As I have almost reached the age of retirement, I am now looking forward to enjoying it in this peaceful country.

Participant 003 Summary

Summary

I completed Advanced Level school certificate in Sri Lanka which is equivalent to CEGEP in Quebec. Then I applied for a government scholarship to attend a special university in India for a 3 year full-time program to get a university degree in home economics. I got selected for it, and I successfully completed it in India, and returned to Sri Lanka. Then I got myself employed as a home science teacher in a girl's college where I worked for 12 years. Around this time I got married to a Sri Lankan Canadian and had to leave my job to come over to Canada for a better life. When I arrived here I saw the necessity of French to obtain work, and followed French classes, retrained myself and obtained a CEGEP attestation in early childhood education and prepared myself for work. After all this work, through a Sri Lankan contact I was able to get a job as an educator in a daycare center in Montreal. The owner of the daycare noted that I am a devoted worker and my responsible way of handling children and offered me the post of directress in one of her daycare centers. I did it for 4 years but as I had to travel far and the work load was too much, I gave it up and found the position of an educator in a daycare center close to my home.

Career identity in Quebec

In Montreal I wanted to do a job somewhat similar to the one I held in Sri Lanka, for example as a teacher or a dietician. But I realized that French language is a barrier, and the lack of recognition of my teaching experience as

valid work experience would be an issue for me, and the equalization of my educational qualifications to a lower level here created another problem.

I found out I would have to go back to high school to get the credits needed to pursue a career as a dietician and I didn't want to go back again. I couldn't give that much time and I had to think of getting some other job instead. In the meantime I was able to find a job in a daycare center through a Sri Lankan friend of mine. Initially I felt a big difference from the work I used to do in Sri Lanka and I didn't like it. The work was very different, the way the work was carried out was very different, so I found it confusing and dissatisfying. Then I decided to get qualified as an educator and do the college attestation in Early Childhood Education. It was not easy to take the required night courses for three years. That was a hard time, travelling far by bus at night to follow the classes in the winter was discouraging.

Step by step I realized that if I stick to anglophone daycare centers that I could overcome the barrier of learning French. Also, the daycare educator position had similarities to my former job of teaching as both were of a teaching nature and dealt with children, though at different age levels, thus I was trying to adjust my mind to accept the situation here. By this time I was forced to stick to my daycare job as I was separated from my husband and was taking care of my 2 sons as a single mother. I got around the obstacle of French by getting work in anglophone daycare centers. The particular challenges of this job were the parents of the children, particularly the diversity of the parents and the

accommodations that I had to make to their varying demands, and getting used to interacting with them.

It took 3 or 4 years of work after completing the training course to feel settled and really feel comfortable in the job. I got good feedback from the parents at parent-teacher interviews, they appreciated my work, and that made me feel good about my new job. I also know that because of my past work experience in Sri Lanka I can do a lot of creative things with children. I understand the field, and this gives a special standard to my work. For example, I bring creative expression and play arts to my work, this is very important for young children because it turns learning into play and magic. And I see this difference between myself and other educators, and other educators recognize this in my work. This quality in me makes me feel good about my work.

By this time I had accepted myself as an early childhood educator, and after 3 to 4 years of working as an educator, I was hired to be the directress of the daycare center. I held that post for 4 years and then decided to return to being an educator because it was too demanding for the salary that was given. I feel that one challenge that I had to face in the position of directress was being a person of visible minority, and I expected that this could be an issue. It gives people a first impression and some people look at me from a different perspective. I felt some people judged me in certain ways even before they could get to know me. When I was searching for work I noticed this at my interviews. Not getting due recognition to my educational qualifications and experience was a big disadvantage for me as I had to start my career almost at the beginning again.

Career Satisfaction

I was very satisfied with my career as a home science teacher in Sri Lanka. I feel teaching is a good career for women because the teaching schedule permits more time to be at home to be with your children. This career fits with female gender identity because it's traditionally viewed as appropriate for women. Here, I chose early childhood education because it has similarities to the teaching job I had in Sri Lanka. I wanted to work and be independent and occupied. Daycare is a field that is somewhat similar to teaching in schools and with which I feel comfortable.

About my career identity, in a sense I have forgotten what I was in Sri Lanka and left it in the past, and continue with the work I am doing here and got used to it, like a separation between who I was and who I am now. And I feel it isn't so bad once you get used to it, you feel okay. You perceive your job as being a different experience in the context of being in a different country. You know that if you were in Sri Lanka you would have been in a more responsible position, but here it's okay to be doing this job.

The main problem here is that you don't get a good salary. This creates a problem at work too because the daycares cannot attract good educators on account of this. I worked in a particular daycare for 3 to 4 years and because of my capabilities, I was appointed as the directress of one of its branches. I held that position for 4 years at that daycare center. It was good and at the same time hard to do as there were too many demands from the parents and the institute and it was not worth when you think of the salary they paid. So I chose to return to

the post of educator, where I had to be in charge of one class only. The directress position is mainly a managerial position; I have tried it and found the demands to be too high for the salary that was paid.

Reflecting back on my 17 working years in Canada, I feel it's okay, the work keeps me occupied, it's a job that I wouldn't mind doing, it suits my personality, although it is not the job I wanted, it is good enough for me compared to the various demands and challenges in other jobs here. I feel okay with this job, it's a compromise.

I like to work and I want to be gainfully occupied, but also I must have some free time for myself and not work day and night. The values that I bring to my work are being patient, tolerant, compromising, sharing the knowledge, creativity, and being able to do teamwork. As daycare educators belong to many different nationalities I feel the children learn that people of many ethnicities exist in Canada. My skills in this job are the ability to deal with parents, having a lot of knowledge about child development, ability to handle a crisis situation at the daycare. Another skill that would help around the daycare is to have good computer skills. Now at this point in life, after working for 37 years with children in the field of education, I am planning to retire in the near future.

Overall I feel, in this job I have gained a different life experience in Canada. Even though I do not enjoy much job satisfaction I've gained different life experiences here. I don't expect people to think the same way as I do because they have grown up in different settings and backgrounds. Their values can be different from those of mine, but I have to be considerate and be respectful

towards them and adapt myself to the different and changing situations in the present day society. It takes time to understand and accept changes. One has to go through it, live with it, and then only with time one can understand. Sometimes you feel that the people here cannot understand us, and know what it's like for someone coming from another country to go through the process here.

Participant 004 Summary

Career Identity in Sri Lanka

In Sri Lanka I worked as a stenographer for 5.5 years in a semi-government organisation. I really liked my job and enjoyed working with other people. It made me feel really good about myself, earning my own income in a good working environment, having a good status in the public eye and being treated like I was somebody. But due to terrorist activities, I had to leave Sri Lanka for security reasons.

Career Identity in Canada

When I arrived in Quebec everything was new, the main language here is French and I had no knowledge of it and it was very hard for me to find a job without French. Despite my experience in stenography, I had to limit myself to English companies to find work. I had no choice but to take up work immediately as I was a single mother of two young children.

Then I thought of daycare work because with babies language requirements were not that specific. So I got my first job in a Montessori school, through a Sri Lankan contact. Because of my family commitments it was difficult for me to work the schedule that was required. As I didn't have a vehicle I had to travel by bus which took time. Without a sufficient income I cannot purchase or maintain a car. I eventually fell ill due to work and had to stop working on doctor's orders. I even considered cleaning houses, but even for that I needed a car to be able to transport cleaning equipment and products to clean a few houses in a day.

Then I had to stay home and get social assistance to survive. I thought of getting my driver's license during that time to help with finding work. I also went for job interviews to work in the back store doing sorting for department stores, because I thought I would have a chance there. They didn't go well and I was very disappointed and upset. When they saw that I didn't speak French they offered me mostly night shifts from 9pm to 6am, but because I am a single mother and there is no one to take care of my kids at night I couldn't accept those positions. It made me realize that without French it wouldn't be easy to find work here.

Presently I am on social assistance and studying French through a government program during the day while my children attend school. It would take a year and 3 months to complete the entire French program, provided I am able to progress without repeating classes. My goal here is to find work because I am the only provider in my family and I cannot pick and choose jobs but will accept whatever work that is offered to me. I have no time to think about my career because money is the important factor now. Career progression is not important, survival is my focus now. I feel that I went 10 yrs backwards instead of going forward career-wise. I never expected this situation in an advanced country like Canada. But at least I have safety, security and personal freedom here.

My children are happy and settled in schools in Montreal and their first language is French, and I don't want to move elsewhere in Canada because I want them to have a good future here. Therefore I have put my personal goals aside for

the future of my children. I want to give them a good life and a good education. It makes me feel sad that I cannot provide them everything they need such as swimming classes, etc. due to my financial limitations. This is not what I imagined prior to coming to Canada. My career blockage has resulted in many negative consequences for my personal life.

I never expected it would take as long as six years to get settled and obtain a proper job. I worry whether even after the French courses I would be able to obtain a job, due to competition with younger and more qualified candidates. I don't know if I will be able to learn French properly either, because after classes I have all the family responsibilities of a mother and a father on my shoulders. My wish and hope is to get work in a school, for example, as a lunch lady, so my annual schedule will match my children's schooling.

I want to work because I want to present a good role model for my daughters, where they will also work and not depend on the government. I live in hope for the opportunity to prove myself. It's important for my self-esteem to be able to somehow overcome this obstacle and move on. It would make me feel like a worthwhile person. I have not been able to prove myself as a worthwhile person, the way I felt in Sri Lanka. I feel that when I apply for jobs they interview me just for the sake of interviewing, and I come home disappointed. Several daycares I applied to did not take me due to lack of French language, whereas the two daycare jobs I got were through Sri Lankan contacts. I feel that people here do not know about my skills, and didn't give me a chance to prove myself. It took a while for me to get adjusted to the society here, not having a

job, the new environment and hardships, homesickness, and my high expectations contributed towards frustration, disappointment, and breakdown of my health. But I put up a brave front for the sake of my daughters. They are what keep me going, and the hope they'll have a better life than I do.

I would like if there is community services and resources for people like me, so there will be hope to make a better life for ourselves. I would like my daughters to feel like they are accepted by society. It is important to look after myself and give something back to the community; right now I don't have the capability to do any of that.

Participant 005 Summary

Career Evolution

I started working in Sri Lanka as a nanny, then as a data entry operator for 5 years, then a break of 3-4 years when my child was born, and then as a receptionist in an international school for 4 years. I was a hard worker and my job as a receptionist was a well-recognized job.

Then I arrived in Canada in September 2006 as a permanent resident because I was sponsored due to the tsunami crisis and was eligible to look for work immediately. So I immediately started looking for work and French language was the first block. It was unexpected and it was difficult to face. I was also homesick because I left everything and my relatives in Sri Lanka.

I had expected to do daycare work here because I like children, and I expected that it would be easy to find work here because of my English fluency, but it wasn't because of the French language.

So through a Sri Lankan contact in Montreal, I got a job as an aide in an anglophone senior's home. I worked for a month but I was so depressed because I would think about my home, my mother, and everything back in Sri Lanka, as well as the darkness in winter here. I would work but I would also be crying at the same time. So they fired me and that was a blow to me because I never expected they would stop me. That was hard to take because I was not yet settled in Montreal.

Then I looked in the Gazette and found an ad for a general help job in a biscuit factory. I went for the interview and I was asked to start the next day. It

was easy to get that job. There are a lot of women working in that job and the work environment is anglophone. I worked there for 2 years and am still there today. So I work very hard, I don't idle like others. I do the maximum 8 hours and I am respected. Now I feel settled in Montreal and I don't miss Sri Lanka. I feel happy with my job though it is general work in a factory, and I feel settled by this time.

The main thing that makes me happy is that I feel that every job is respected here. All are considered equal, and people don't look down on me because of my job. I work along with others, helping each other. Also, I am paid monthly and I can afford a good life with that money. I am responsible for the rent, the bills, and my mother in Sri Lanka. Because I get laid off temporarily when there isn't much work at the factory, I have taken on a second job at another anglophone senior's home where I am a meal server. I am finding it a very good job though it is only part-time.

Also, I want to achieve my goals in life, because I don't want to be doing general work in a factory forever. I want to buy a house, a car, and be my own boss and have my own business, for example a restaurant or a daycare. I feel there are many avenues in Montreal if I want to improve my life, but the only problem is the French. I have been going to schools and getting information but the only problem is that I have to stop working to study, and I cannot do that because of my financial responsibilities. So I feel that for another 3 years or so, I will work and save money and then I will be able to pursue my studies and change fields. Also my child will be nineteen and my responsibilities will be less. I don't

want to ask money from the government for no reason, but if I were to study, it would be good if the government could help me. I am currently taking night classes in French, but the problem is that it is entirely in French and as an adult learner it is difficult to follow. I wish they would explain in English too, so that I could learn more easily. Because I am doing two jobs and doing French classes at night, it is difficult for me to study. But I have no choice because I do not have sufficient money.

I love this country, everything is good, I am very happy, and this is a peaceful country. It's better than Sri Lanka and French is the only problem. I haven't met anyone who has learned French fluently and I think that's because of their age. I feel that it's not worth the time because those who have gone up to the highest levels of the course are still not able to talk French fluently.

I had an office job in Sri Lanka and here I do a factory job because I can't get an office job. I feel that what one may have done in Sri Lanka cannot be continued here because of the French. One has to get adjusted to this and I have now got adjusted to it. I think that my flexibility helped me in making this adjustment. So now I am happy because I had to understand this and accept it. What's important to me now is that I am happy on the job, not crying and unhappy the way I was when I was homesick at the first senior's home job. Adjusting to life in Canada also affects work, and upon arrival it is difficult to work, because homesickness and adjustment to winter takes 3-4 months.

I enjoy my work, I want to be occupied all the time and work makes me feel good. I see myself working until 65 or 70, as long as I can do so. I want to

establish myself and be able to buy a house, a car, etc. I don't want to move to another province because it is very peaceful and homely in Montreal.

Participant 006 Summary

Summary

In Sri Lanka, I had completed my education and obtained the general certificate of education in Advanced Level, which is equivalent to CEGEP in Montreal, Quebec. After that, I followed a vocational education course in shorthand, typewriting and bookkeeping in a technical college and started working as an accounts clerk in a private company in Sri Lanka. I was happy and proud of my job. The directors appreciated my work. I worked hard and other people respected me for my work. I was able to help my parents financially with the income I received.

When I came to Canada, I wanted to do the same kind of work. But I found that it was difficult to obtain such work without the knowledge of French. Therefore, I took up a French course for three months. But I needed money to live in Montreal, and therefore could not spend time for studies and started to work as a babysitter. As I always wanted to do a job similar to the one I did in Sri Lanka, I found work in the company that my husband had been working. There I worked as a shipping and receiving clerk. I liked that work, as it was somewhat similar to the work of accounts clerk that I did in Sri Lanka. However, this work was much more physically demanding, as I had to work standing all the time in a warehouse environment.

As my immigration case has not yet been settled even after four years to date, I do not get any family allowance and have to find money for my children's education, health care, high fees for immigration lawyers and other day to day

living expenses. This situation compels me to take up any type of work however difficult or physically demanding, as I need the money to survive and meet the family expenses.

Career Identity

In Sri Lanka, I saw myself as an employee of high standing, in a well-recognized company. I obtained the necessary education and training to secure this position. I saw my employment as a great asset which gave me status, self-pride and financial independence. I received a decent salary with which I was able to maintain a good standard of living, and help my parents as well. It was a comfortable office job which the general population would envy to have.

When I moved to Montreal, I expected that I will have plenty of opportunity to develop my career, as Canada is an industrially developed country. However, my immigration status led my career expectations in a different direction. It made me realize the necessity to earn money to live in Montreal, rather than spend time in following classes to prepare myself for quality jobs. It changed my attitude towards my career development, and made me accept any kind of work that would provide the money to meet my basic needs in life.

According to my immigration status, I am not eligible for any government facilities such as Medicare, family allowance or educational expenses for children. Therefore, I have no choice but to accept any work that was available in order to meet these expenses. The employers were not willing to hire me as I possess only a temporary work permit, and very often I was offered part-time, temporary or unrecognized positions at low salaries. Sometimes, I had to go on

unemployment insurance. This situation completely took away my career identity, and irrespective of the quality or job satisfaction, I started accepting any kind of work for the sake of money. At this moment, I am facing this crisis, but I have not given up hope. I am waiting for a change of my immigration status, which will give me the opportunity to obtain the kind of employment that I always wanted.

Chronology

I came to Canada with the hope of furthering my career goals. I was mentally prepared to go through the stages of retraining to improve my career status. To obtain the working knowledge of French, I followed French classes for three months. However, the immediate financial needs of the family made me take up the job of babysitting, which I did for about one and a half years. As my desire is to work in a public place, I was successful in obtaining work in a shipping company where my husband was employed. Though that job was physically demanding, I enjoyed it because I had friends there, and the work was somewhat similar to the position of accounts clerk that I held in Sri Lanka. Unfortunately, that company went bankrupt and I had to go on unemployment insurance. Again, I found temporary work in a clothing company within three months.

At the moment, I am going through a difficult time in relation to my employment, as my immigration case has not yet been settled. My request for asylum has been rejected, but I have appealed that decision on humanitarian grounds. Now it has been four years since my arrival in 2005, and life has been

tedious for me and my family. Because of this situation, I am granted only a temporary work permit and employers do not offer steady jobs. This has been the biggest barrier for my career advancement, although I am willing to do whatever necessary for my progress. Although I have to improve my French, it is not a problem for me, as I am willing and ready to follow classes to come up to the necessary standard.

Identity

As a Sri Lankan woman, I was educated and trained towards obtaining reasonable employment to live as a financially independent, skilled and capable person. This I achieved to my satisfaction, and I became an accounts clerk in a leading, commercial company. Because of my job position, I was respected and well-placed in my community. I felt like a hard-working and productive person. I had in my mind to further develop and progress in my career. The next step, I thought, was to migrate to Canada, where I will have plenty of opportunity for career development, but the immigration and language issues have reduced my chances of achieving my career goals. I am still confident, courageous and hopeful that I can succeed in obtaining an office job similar to what I was doing in Sri Lanka, after obtaining a favourable decision from the immigration board. At the moment, I have lost my career identity, and I am focused on accepting any job that is offered to me in order to manage my financial needs. Although this makes me sad, I believe that with hard work, I can catch up the time that I lost during these four years of immigration issues.

Participant 007 Summary

Career Identity in Sri Lanka

My family supported my studies and I completed my professional training and became an architect in Sri Lanka. Then I worked as an architect for one year for the Sri Lankan government building corporation, which is the organization that oversees all the government building projects. I felt very happy about getting that job because it's a very prestigious position and requires passing competitive exams to get it. I wanted to improve my skills and I was engaged in a training course at the time I was to get married and move to Montreal.

Career Identity in Quebec

I hoped that I would be able to get absorbed into the Canadian system and continue with my architectural profession. But when my certificates were verified for equivalences, they were evaluated to a lower level, and made it necessary to get high-school qualifications here. This was not possible because I did not have French language qualifications. If I were to pursue my career here, it meant that I should put in about ten years of academic and professional training all over again. This discouraged me to continue in the profession that I was trained in. Even then, I began the process of high school equivalence and completed the math and the English but got stuck on the French. It was frustrating. I wanted to develop my career. But with the challenges that I had to face I got discouraged and changed my mind. I wanted to find work, so I went to a factory to work as a labourer, I cried because I had to do odd jobs like that. This wasn't the way I wanted to proceed in life and I felt so low about myself. I was mad at my

husband for bringing me here. Then I decided to carry on with my family life, had two children, and was a stay-at-home mother for 5 years.

Then I started helping my husband with the family business. When I worked in my own business, I did not feel any of the obstacles. For French language, we hired a bookkeeper who translated for us. My work in that business improved, I had more than 20 employees, and I was playing a big role, as accountant, manager of the warehouse, working on the floor if someone had to be replaced, therefore essentially controlling the whole business. I enjoyed this work. I felt very good about myself, I felt very satisfied money-wise and position-wise. I continued it for 5 years.

Instead of taking up lower level jobs, I felt that the business gave me a boost, because doing odd jobs made me feel down and unhappy. But with the business I felt comfortable speaking to people about my job. I felt that people perceived me as an efficient person. But the working hours of the family business became very long and with my children's needs and the housework, it became too much and I needed a rest and I stopped work for 6 months.

Then I thought I must do something for my own personal satisfaction, and decided to do hairdressing. I did a one year training program and became a qualified hairdresser. Even on that job, the French became an issue because hair salons sought to hire hairdressers who spoke French even though many customers spoke English. Also it limited the number of customers who come to me. But I have found a hair salon and am still working with them. It's not the career I

wanted and I don't feel that I belong there, but I have to do something to support my family. My future goal is to open my own salon.

I play an important role in supporting my family financially. I feel it is important for women to work and for children to see that mothers are not dependent on others. I want them to think that there is a need for women to go to work. Also I feel that I learn more from society by working outside. Also it's a big relief for my family so that all the financial pressure is not on one person. As a married woman I have always worked other than when my children were very young. And I see myself continuing to work as long as I could.

Looking back on my professional path, I am not happy. When I go back to Sri Lanka on vacation, I meet old friends and am ashamed to speak about the jobs I did here, because they are in very good positions, heads of departments, having professional recognition and prestige. When I migrated to Canada, they said I would be a big architect because of the opportunities that are available here. But that was not the way things really were and I feel ashamed to face them. The main obstacle is the French language. If it wasn't there, I would have spent the first 4 years studying and then by now I would have 10 years of experience in the workforce. I might even have designed my own house, which is a dream I still have. Being in Canada without an extended family, it is not easy to go through all the obstacles. It's my inner strength that helps me to go through all this.

Although I missed my career goal, I am at peace because all the opportunities are open for my children and they will benefit by being in Canada. It's for their future that I am living here. They can achieve what I couldn't. I feel

like my life went upside down after migrating to Canada I was not able to achieve my goal of working as an architect and I am not happy about that especially because I have invested so much in preparing for it in Sri Lanka. Migration disrupted it all. Now if I went back to school, the courses would take 6 years, then I would be 50 and a new generation of architecture students would be coming up and I feel employers would hire the younger people.

I feel confused as to my professional identity, and I do not know where I am going to end up. I feel I achieved nothing and that makes me feel sad. My main focus was achieving my dream, but after coming to Canada I lost everything. Deep inside, I question who I am and feel that I am nobody. It makes no sense. When I look at other women who have achieved their professional goals, I think I could have done the same. So it was a huge loss. I try not to turn back and think about it because it hurts me.

Since I can't make it at work, I focus on my family life and try to be a good wife and mother. I do not want my kids to feel frustrated like me, but achieve whatever they want. I think that if I came here as a child, I wouldn't be in this situation. I can see all the opportunities around me, but I don't have access to them. Sometimes I feel discriminated too, and even though others would react angrily if they got the comments I get, I do not do so as I could lose my clients.

I see people who come from Europe or the US and though they don't speak French, they still get good jobs and I think maybe it's because of their contacts. Qualifications and experience obtained in other countries should be given due recognition, otherwise it hurts one's career advancement and

professional identity. It would be okay to do some exams but to retrain for years is too much. It's a waste of time and makes me fed up. Also, everyone doesn't have the time for that. It would not be possible to go back to Sri Lanka now because I have been out of my field for several years and haven't accumulated years of experience. Now I feel that I do not belong here or there.

If the government, companies or human resources changed the placement rules for professional workers who come here from overseas, it would help a lot. Also changing the message that this is the land of opportunities because when you go on the job market you find out that it isn't so. You feel that the dissatisfaction that comes from the career expectations and resulting losses are what causes depression. You feel that career is that important, and that it would make a difference in someone's feelings. Changing the current situation to a fair and equitable one would make a difference in healthcare costs.

Participant 008 Summary

Career Identity in Sri Lanka

I studied the Montessori method of teaching young children and got a diploma in that field. Then I became a preschool teacher in a Montessori school and worked there for three years. I loved my job and everyone said that I perfectly suited for this line of work. The children loved me and I loved them and the parents also loved me. I got a lot of positive feedback from my children and their parents. I taught in a large Montessori school and I was considered as a good kind teacher. Children wanted to be in my class and parents wanted their children to be in my class. I found this work fun and interesting and it made me very happy. I wanted to improve my work. During this time, I got married to a Sri Lankan Canadian and then immigrated to Canada.

Career Identity in Quebec

My plan was to come to Canada and continue to work as a preschool teacher. But now I see that I have to improve my fluency in English, and for that I am taking English classes in high school. Next, I am planning to study French to be able to interact with people in everyday life. However, I find it to be a very big headache to have to learn French and I find it to be a difficult language. After that, because my Sri Lankan Montessori diploma is not recognized here, I have to follow a program in early childhood education which will take three years for a degree or one year for an attestation.

Having to do all these steps is going to take a lot of time and it drives me crazy to have to do all that over again. It's a big headache because I have already studied the Montessori method and obtained a few years of experience. I live with my husband's family and I feel that I am a burden on them. I feel an internal pressure to work, even though no one is pressuring me towards it. I would like to work for the sake of working, irrespective of the money that I could earn thereby. I think a lot about the fact of my being unemployed and it makes me feel very bad to the point of crying. I would like to earn money but that is mostly to help my younger sister and younger brother in Sri Lanka.

My goal is to complete the early childhood education training course and then to get Canadian work experience in a daycare centre and eventually open my own home daycare. Though I have all these plans I don't know where it will lead me to. My dream is to do home daycare and it is my own personal project.

I have no financial responsibilities and my husband and his family give me lots of support to carry on with my studies. My husband encourages me to become fluent in English and French prior to starting my daycare training program so that I can be successful in my studies. This is why it is possible for me to study comfortably now. I would like to continue in the line of early childhood education for now and I don't foresee any changes to my career path in the near future.

Participant 009 Summary

Summary

Before arriving in Montreal, Quebec, I was working as a telex operator in the postal and telecommunications department in Sri Lanka. This was a government job with all government benefits. I felt very secure and satisfied with this job. In order to obtain this position, I had to pass the Advanced Level school certificate which is equivalent to CEGEP here in Quebec. Also, I had to follow a training course in telecommunications at the technical college. Holding this job gave me recognition and respect socially, and I gained financial freedom and was able to function as an independent person.

When I arrived in Montreal, I expected to get a similar type of job. But as I had a child of three years and soon had another baby, I was not in a position to go out for work. It took a while for me to get adjusted to the environment here, like getting used to the French language and weather conditions.

When I applied for equalization of my qualifications and experience, I found that they were not given due recognition and I was placed at a lower level. I could not go for retraining or learning as the children were too young, and I had to share the financial responsibilities of the family with my husband. Although we were accepted as immigrants, the government did not provide us with any financial assistance. Therefore, we had to take up whatever work that was available to meet the family expenses here.

With the help of some Sri Lankan friends, I obtained work as a sewing-machine operator to work from home. This was a good condition for me as I

could take care of my children while doing my job from home. I did this for nine years, and when the children grew up, I became free to look for work outside.

At that point, I found work in an electronics company as a general operator through my Sri Lankan friends. I am an honest hard working person and the management recognized my good work, and I was made a group leader. I continued in this job doing the best I can. The management is quite pleased with my work and has promoted me to the level of warehouse inspector. I am happy with my work, and I have been working for this company for seven years.

Career Identity

In Sri Lanka, I was proud of my job as a telecommunications operator, and other people respected me for my position. When I arrived in Montreal and realized the obstacles such as lower equalization of my qualifications and experience, and the French language requirements, I felt very upset and sad. In my first job as sewing-machine operator, I used to cry because I knew that I could do a better job with my computer and typing skills. I thought that I will never be able to use them.

In my second job as a general operator in an electronic company, my hard work was recognized, and I was promoted to the level of warehouse inspector. I am happy with this situation, although it is not the same as the job I held in Sri Lanka. I feel that the acceptance of new conditions is important for your success. My advice for any new immigrant from Sri Lanka is not to have expectations, but be open, and be ready to get adjusted to the new situations.

Chronology

In Sri Lanka I started my career as a telex operator in the postal and telecommunications department. I was happy and proud of my position. I was able to obtain it as I was specially trained and qualified in that field at the technical college. Having worked for several years on this job I moved to Montreal with the hope of improving our living conditions. With my qualifications I expected to find similar work here without a problem.

With my family situation and other career demands and restrictions I had to work as a sewing machine operator from home for almost nine years. Although I lost my career identity as an office worker and it made me feel sad I carried on with it as it provided the money for my family expenses.

When my two children started schooling I again felt the need to work outside in a company where there will be other workers and I could have some friends. Fortunately through my Sri Lankan friends I found work as a general worker in an electronics company. There I had the opportunity to make use of my skills and hard work and go up the ladder. I have been working there for seven years now and have come to the position of warehouse inspector. Although this job is different from what I did in Sri Lanka I like the work and get well paid too. At the moment I am working with hopes and expectations of getting the next promotion to the level of supervisor.

Participant 010 Summary

Career Identity in Sri Lanka

Both my parents were teachers and they supported and encouraged me to go for higher education. As a result I obtained a university degree and have been able to function at administrative and managerial level positions in government departments and corporations. As soon as I passed out from the university I was offered the position of a lecturer at the university. This was a highly respected position and I held it for one year until I found a managerial position in a government corporation. My personal goal was to become a professional of a high standing such as a director of administration in a prestigious government corporation. Also I wanted to have a financially independent comfortable life.

I left the university and joined the industries corporation of Sri Lanka as an executive in personnel management I worked in this corporation for 17 years in different executive capacities. During this period I gained valuable management skills and experience. Here I was in a position of power and authority. With the passing years I obtained promotions and became comfortable in my position. During this period I attended many management seminars and training courses in order to improve my management skills and knowledge.

After those 17 years I felt the need for a change in my career and I joined the national television corporation of Sri Lanka in the capacity of director of administration. As I had many years of experience in similar positions I found that work interesting though somewhat challenging. Here I had to deal with television program producers, artists, musicians and other public personalities.

This was a new chapter in my life and I felt happy and important, with a lot of responsibility and a good salary.

At this time there was increasing terrorist activity in Sri Lanka and for the safety and security of me and my family I decided to move to Canada with my family.

Career Identity in Quebec

I expected that it would be easy for me to find a suitable job here in Montreal, but on arrival I realized that my qualifications and experience were not recognised at the same level as in Sri Lanka. But since I was an emotionally strong hardworking person I thought that I could still make it and didn't give up hopes. Then I followed the one year full-time French course provided by the Quebec government but I found that I was still not able to converse fluently in French and I got disheartened. Also my educational qualifications were equalized to one year of university education here. This caused unrest within me.

I needed to work and started working in a small company as a clerk but despite my best efforts my typing speed was slow, the computer skills were not up to par, I was used to managerial work and I felt that I could not work in an office at the level of a clerk. French too was a big barrier for me to obtain a reasonable position in a company. I realized that I cannot get back to the position that I held in Sri Lanka. This was hard for me and I felt frustrated but my spirit was strong and I was determined to overcome these barriers and stay in Montreal without moving out to another province in Canada.

The immigration officers who deal with new immigrants and guide them in finding employment found my qualifications in the Montessori method of teaching young children, which I had studied to raise my own two children, to be useful in obtaining employment and directed me towards daycare work. I found work in a daycare centre and soon realized the necessity of getting fully qualified in the field of early childhood education.

Although it was tedious to work in the morning, study in the evening, manage family affairs with little support in a new environment, I went ahead with determination and obtained a college diploma in early childhood education. That gave me a feeling of hope and courage and more satisfaction in my work as an early childhood educator. During this early period in Montreal I felt socially isolated and as if I was starting everything from scratch. I also felt professionally isolated in the sense that I was getting pushed out of the mainstream work and getting limited to the English sector and facing competition for jobs with people who were bilingual.

The idea of working for somebody else did not give me a sense of satisfaction. Now that I have obtained Quebec qualifications in early childhood education I wanted to open a daycare centre of my own. This became a burning issue within me, and with the help of my family and friends I opened a daycare center for 30 children. Unfortunately, at this time the Quebec government had tentatively stopped granting government subsidies for new daycares and the financial burden of running the daycare became too much for me. After 3.5 yrs of

hard work I had to close down the daycare. This was a big blow for me and it shattered my hopes.

I was disappointed, financially bankrupt and had to fight my way back. I did not give up. As I had established my professional identity as an early childhood educator I applied to the Quebec government and obtained a permit to operate a home daycare service. This was granted to me and now I have been on this job for 5 years. Although I have had many ups and downs in my career life in Quebec, now that I am at the verge of retirement I can look back and feel satisfied with my current position. I am my own boss and I feel that I provide a good service to the children and their families in the neighbourhood.

When I compare myself with my peers today, several of whom are in high managerial positions in Sri Lanka, I feel that I am not working at the same level as I should be. But at this stage in life I feel that I have made a meaningful career here in Montreal although my professional identity has changed from what it was in Sri Lanka. I feel that by migrating to Canada I have achieved more on a personal level such as having security for my family, widening horizons for my children, and facing new challenges and experiences. The Sri Lankan community here recognize my former professional and social profile and treat me with due respect. In my current position, I see the importance of the formative years of young children and I feel working with to be quite rewarding.